

~~STATE~~  
CHURCH, ~~GOVERNMENT~~ AND EDUCATION IN  
EASTERN NIGERIA (1847-1975)

being a thesis presented

by

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### ABSTRACT

The main subject area of this study is the development of primary and secondary education in Eastern Nigeria from 1847 to 1975. Its two main objectives are to examine the influence of the nature of, and events in the society on the formal school system; and to provide the first study of the topic on that geographical region of Nigeria.

The areas of emphasis are the roles and contributions of the Missionary Societies, the Colonial Government, the successive indigenous Governments and the Local Communities, during the one hundred and twenty-eight year-period covered by the study. Four historical phases are identified, namely: the era of absolute missionary control of education, 1847-1900; partnership between the Churches and the Colonial Government, 1901-1950; the period of conflicts between the indigenous Government and the Missions, 1951-1965; and the Nigerian crisis and the nationalization of the school system, 1966-1975.

The ten chapters of the main body of the thesis, organised in four sections, examine the following issues and questions: the established patterns of Church and State in education; the traditional society in Eastern Nigeria; the Nationalist Government educational policies and its relationship with the Missions; why the schools take-over could not be effected before 1965; the abuses of the partnership system; the actual reasons for nationalizing the schools, and the part played by the events of the national crisis.

Some of the main findings and conclusions (Chapter Eleven) are as follows: Church and State relationship in education varies from place to place. The fast rate at which the school system developed, and its subsequent financial and management problems, were caused largely by inter-denominational and village rivalries. The traditional dogmatic attitude of the Roman Catholic Church towards secular education, the Mission's great power and influence in Eastern Nigeria, made the controversies over the

management and control of the school system a direct confrontation between the Catholics and the Regional Government. The Protestant Churches were more flexible in their attitude for fear of possible Catholic domination of the Region, and on account of their traditional more flexible attitude towards secular education. The schools could not be nationalized before 1965 because the Government had neither the financial resources nor adequate mass support before that date. Many of the charges against the partnership arrangement were both substantiated and inherent in the system. The events of the Nigerian crisis, and the improved financial resources of the Federal Government through oil revenue, made it easier for the schools to be nationalized in 1970 than before 1965. Although partnership will not return, some of its features could be adopted to strengthen the state school system of management and control.

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## INTRODUCTION

Soon after the end of the Nigerian Civil War in 1970, all primary and secondary schools in the Eastern States were nationalized by Military Edicts. That was after nearly twenty years of bitter controversy over their control and management. The Christian Denominations which founded and managed most of the schools opposed the action and insisted that they would not give up the proprietary rights to their schools. The Governments ignored their protests and went ahead to implement the provisions of the Edicts. Since then, the dispute has continued with neither side willing to make any concession on the main issues in dispute.

Realizing that the relationship between the Christian Missions and the successive indigenous Governments of Eastern Nigeria has been persistently strained since the 1950's, and that this type of situation does not exist, at least, on the same scale, in the other parts of the Federation, the author resolved to study the problem in the hope of explaining the long drawn state of unhappy relationship. The study may also be of some practical value in indicating possible basis for an acceptable arrangement for educational control and management in Eastern Nigeria in future.

### A. Background to the Problem

Although the preparations started four years earlier, it was not until October 1 1954 that Nigeria actually became a Federation of three (later four) Regions and a Federal Territory, Lagos. From that date, each of the regions, (Northern Region, and in the South, Western and Eastern Regions) was vested with wide legislative and executive powers over matters in its own area of jurisdiction.

Until 1946, Nigeria was by and large, administered under a unitary form of Government. It was in that year that Sir Arthur Richards, the then Governor of the country, in recognition of the fact that the territory

falls naturally into three Regions, the North, the West and the East, and that the peoples of those areas differ widely in customs, in outlook and in their traditional systems of government, introduced a new constitution aimed at making it possible for each group to progress at its own pace within the context of one Nigeria, and without sacrificing the divergent ways of life of the different peoples. The aim of the new Constitution therefore, was "to promote the unity of Nigeria, to provide adequately within that desire for the diverse elements which make up the country, and to secure greater participation by Africans in the discussion of their own affairs".<sup>1</sup>

The Richards Constitution as it was known, which came into force in 1947 proved rather short lived because inspite of its declared objectives, it was essentially unitary and for this reason, it was widely criticised by the nationalist agitators. It was replaced with another one drawn up under the governorship of Sir James Macpherson and introduced in 1951. The Macpherson's Constitution as the new one was known, was a step further in the direction of a federal status for Nigeria but, did not fully incorporate all the principles of federalism. For instance, the Regional Governments were given powers to determine policies and to regulate the development of education in their areas of jurisdiction without the corresponding authority to raise the revenue to finance it. There were other similar examples. For this reason, and like the one before it, the new constitution was criticized and rejected by the nationalists. It was replaced with a fully federal one in 1954.

Before Nigeria actually became a Federation between 1946 and 1954, education, on the side of the Government, was centrally controlled, regulated and financed although with some devolution of powers from the centre to the

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<sup>1</sup>Crowther, M., The Story of Nigeria, Faber and Faber, London, 1962, p. 242; see also Ezera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, Cambridge University Press, 1964, pp. 66-70 ff.



provincial authorities. But with the federalization of the country, education along with other social services, became the responsibility of the Regional Governments as is usual with federal states such as the United States of America, Western Germany, Australia, Canada, etc.

From the time education was made a regional or state subject (see *infra* Chapter 2.7) till at least 1975, there had been many controversies and confrontations over the control and the management of the school system between the Christian Missionary Societies on one hand, and the various Governments which had since ruled the Eastern parts of Nigeria. This was very much unlike the Western parts of the country where the societies also founded and managed the majority of the primary and secondary schools. There were instances in which the disagreements led to violent riots in which "school buildings were burned and the homes of politicians looted or threatened with destruction".<sup>2</sup> At other times, there had been sharp exchanges between the Missions and the Governments through the press and other information media and each side had levelled many accusations on the other over the issues involved. Since then too, there had been official inquiries<sup>3</sup> and educational seminars<sup>4</sup> on how best to resolve the points in dispute. Before 1965, the Government passed laws and made regulations<sup>5</sup> to strengthen its

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<sup>2</sup>Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education An African Case, Stanford University Press, California, 1969, p. 182.

<sup>3</sup>See Ministry of Education, Report of the Review on the Educational System in Eastern Nigeria (Chairman: Prof. K.O. Dike), Official Document No. 19 of 1962, Government Printer, Enugu. (This document is hereinafter referred to as 'Dike Commission Report'); and Report of the Conference on the Review of Education System in Eastern Nigeria (Chairman: Dr. A. Ikoku) Official Document No. 25 of 1964. (It is hereinafter referred to as 'Ikoku Conference Report').

<sup>4</sup>Institute of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Minutes of the Seminar on Administration, Organisation, Financing of Primary Education and the Establishment of School Boards in Eastern Nigeria, June 1965 (an unpublished document) hereinafter referred to as 'Nsukka Seminar' and Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria, Report of the Comparative Education Seminar Abroad Official Document No. 21 of 1963, Government Printer, Enugu.

<sup>5</sup>See Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria. Education Handbook 1964, Official Document No. 16 of 1964, Government Printer, Enugu. This is a composite publication on Education Laws, Regulations and Circulars in Eastern Nigeria from 1956-1964.

position over the control and the management of the school system and in some cases, the Missions, particularly the Roman Catholic Mission, opposed the new measures through demonstrations, the press, and pamphlets to their members and the general public.

During the national crisis and the civil war (1966-70, see Chapters 2.7 and 10.1), there was little schooling in the Eastern parts of Nigeria where most of the fighting took place. For this reason, the controversies appeared to have been forgotten. But with the restoration of peace and the re-opening of schools, the quarrels started once again. The Military Governments which ruled the then three States into which the territory was divided in 1967, replied by promulgating Education Edicts<sup>6</sup> nationalising all primary and secondary schools. The Missions and other private agencies were banned by law from opening or running schools and the provisions of the Edicts were not to be challenged in any law court in the land.

The Education Edicts were followed with a series of official pamphlets and other publications<sup>7</sup> aimed at educating the public on the action of the Governments. Public reaction was mixed. Some supported the forceful take-over of the schools by the Governments and others condemned it outright. The Missions on their part have since continued to issue their own pamphlets describing the action as 'totalitarian' and as a "denial of the fundamental human rights given to man by God the Creator". Neither the Catholics, nor the Protestant Missions as a body, is prepared to give "up her proprietary rights to her educational institutions."<sup>8</sup> The sudden change

<sup>6</sup>See East Central State of Nigeria: Public Education Edict 1970, Edict No.2 of 1971, Government Printer, Enugu; South-Eastern State of Nigeria: Education Edict, No. 5 of 1975 (with retrospective effect from 1st April, 1973) Government Printer, Calabar; and Rivers State of Nigeria: Education (Proprietorship and Management of Schools) Edict No. 14 of 1971 (with retrospective effect from 1st September 1968), Government Printer, Port Harcourt.

<sup>7</sup>Ministry of Information and Home Affairs: The Merits of the Public Education Edicts, Series 1-8, Government Printer, Enugu n.d.

<sup>8</sup>See Catholic Bishops of East Central State of Nigeria: Education 1971 Easter Joint Pastoral Letter, Tabansi Press, Onitsha, 1971, pp. 12-17; Catholic Bishops of South-Eastern State of Nigeria: 'Teach Ye All Nations Christmas, 1973' Joint Pastoral Letter on Education, St. Jerome's Press, Uyo, pp.10-14; and the Christian Council of Nigeria, Eastern Area Committee (the Protestant Missions) The Church in Education, Union Printers Ltd., Enugu, 15th June, 1971, pp.2-3.

of management and the effects of the civil war have both affected the schools in different ways. A lot of things are said to be in a state of confusion - problems of standards, financing, effective management, etc are alleged to be worse than ever before.

By December, 1975, when the author interviewed some of the Church leaders, heads of primary and secondary institutions and Government officials and visited some of the schools, the quarrels were still far from being settled as no mutual agreement had been reached and, the confusion was still very much in evidence. Thus, for more than twenty years, the control and the management of primary and secondary education have been a subject of serious controversy between the Missionary Societies and the Governments in the Eastern parts of Nigeria.

This research is an attempt to study and analyse the school system and the forces playing on it to see whether it is possible to identify the factors that make it so susceptible to serious controversies over its control and management, and to call attention to what hopefully, may be done in the interest of education and the younger generation. We will elaborate more on this when we discuss the purpose of the study.

#### B. Focus of the Study

The geographical area covered by this study is the section of the Federation of Nigeria formly known as the Eastern Region and later divided into the Anambra, Cross-River, Imo and Rivers States. For its physical location, and its political development to date, see Chapter 2.1 and 7 respectively. The choice of the area of study was influenced by the fact that the author himself is an Ibo, the largest ethnic group in Eastern Nigeria, and that he is more familiar with education and the people there than the other parts of the Federation. The familiarity stems from his personal experiences as a product of the school system, a primary and secondary school teacher, an Education Officer in different parts of the territory and finally as a lecturer in one of its Colleges of Education for the training of primary and secondary

school teachers. It was from the last two positions in particular that he watched the controversies from the 'ring-side' and developed the interest that led to this investigation.

The main topic of investigation is the relationship between the Christian Missionary Societies which founded and managed most of the primary and secondary grammar schools and the various successive Governments from the Colonial period till the nationalization of the school system, and the state of education at those two levels from then till 1975. In the process of doing this, we will examine the nature of the traditional society in Eastern Nigeria, the origin and the development of the school system, the sources of educational finance, the roles played by the Christian Missions, and the Governments and their policies, and the areas of conflict and their causes.

This study is primarily concerned with the Anglican Church Missionary Society (CMS), the Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission (CSM), the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM), and the Methodist Missionary Society (MMS) on one hand, and the Governments on the other. There were, however, other such agencies in the education enterprise as: the Qua Iboe Mission, the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, the Salvation Army, the Baptist Mission, Local Communities, Cultural Organisations and Private Individuals whose schools were also taken over by the State. But we are not strictly concerned with them.

There are two main reasons for limiting the study to the activities of those four Missions. In the first place, they were the first to arrive in Eastern Nigeria and they founded and managed more than three-quarters of the schools taken over by the State as will be shown in Section Two of this study. Secondly, all through the years, especially during the series of controversies, they featured much more than the other non-government agencies and in fact, actually spoke for them particularly, their fellow missionary bodies who owned only a small number of the schools.

### C. Purpose of the Study:

This study has two principal objectives. First, it is an attempt to describe and to analyse the development of the formal school system (primary and secondary) in Eastern Nigeria to see how far it was influenced by the cultural, political, economic and religious aspects of life in the society. The emphasis will be on what actually happened and why from 1847, when the first school was opened until the nationalisation of the schools in 1970 and its immediate aftermath. In doing this, five main groups of specific issues and questions will be constantly borne in mind, namely:

(i) What are the established patterns in the relationship between Church and State in education; and what factors influence the adoption of one type of arrangement by a given society in preference to another?

(ii) The rate at which the school system developed in Eastern Nigeria; and the relationship between that process on one hand, and the nature of the society.

(iii) The educational policies pursued by the Nationalist Governments from 1951 to 1965; and why those policies could not be fully implemented before the outbreak of the national crisis and the civil war; and whether both events had any effects on the subsequent state take-over of the schools and its timing.

(iv) Whether the alleged abuses of the partnership arrangement were the actual cause of the series of conflicts between Church and State in education, and reason for nationalising the schools; or whether there were other fundamental considerations which were generally not mentioned in the public debates.

(v) Whether the weaknesses ascribed to the partnership arrangement were 'operational' and open to remedy within the system; or whether they were structural, i.e. inherent in the system, and therefore could not be cured without nationalizing the schools; and the prospects and

possibilities of the new state school system.

The second main objective is more concrete and practical. It is to provide in one volume, and from a variety of sources, a historical account of the development of primary and secondary education in that part of Nigeria, and the forces that shaped it during a period of 128 years. As will be shown in the "review of literature" (see Section D), this work is the first descriptive and analytical study from a non-partisan point of view, of "Church, Government and Education in Eastern Nigeria" as a component part within the Federation, and covering the school system from its beginning in 1847 up to 1975.

Although the study is not addressed to any special audience, all the same the author believes that it will be useful to students of Nigerian education. It may also, by identifying some problem areas in the present arrangements for management and control, provide pointers to how the system could possibly be strengthened for the future.

#### D. Review of Literature

##### (i) Works on 'Church, State and Education in Eastern Nigeria':

(a) The first work directly on the topic of this investigation is Archbishop (Dr.) Francis Arinze's forty-four page pamphlet entitled Partnership in Education Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria, published in 1965. It came at a time when one of the many controversies between the Missionary Societies (the Roman Catholic Church in particular) and the Regional Government was very serious and topical.

The Catholic Archbishop presented an outline account of the origin of the school system and the contributions made to its development by the Christian Missionary Societies and the Government. From there, he went on to cite instances where partnership between Church and State in education had been 'successful' in other parts of the world, and concluded that in the case of Eastern Nigeria, it was possible and would 'succeed'.

The arguments in the pamphlet were that the Church had to be in education because to exclude it was "to put God into a pigeon hole", and that education without religion "has as much meaning as water without hydrogen and oxygen", and "that even if the Government paid one hundred per cent of the costs of running schools, the right of private individuals and religious bodies to educate the young should remain unimpaired."<sup>9</sup>

Archbishop Arinze's work is important only as a restatement of the stand of his Mission on the issues involved. He merely looked at the right of the Church to educate from the Catholic point of view. It was not a study of the problems and issues involved but, a rejoinder to a Government proposal to set up Provincial Boards to take over the management of primary schools in Eastern Nigeria.

(b) Dr. Arinze's publication was followed almost immediately by a reply from Dr. Tai Solarin, a Nigerian Social Reformer and a former secondary school Principal. He argued that in all countries where education was controlled by the Catholic Church, there was a high rate of mass illiteracy. He cited the examples of "Catholic Spain, Catholic Portugal, Catholic Italy, Catholic Eire, the Big Four of Europe - in unprogressiveness and unbelievably high rate of illiteracy", and called them "The Highest Four in Europe".<sup>10</sup> Dr. Solarin concluded by calling on the Eastern Nigerian Government to go ahead and take over the management of the mission schools because "Partnership between Roman

<sup>9</sup>Arinze, F.A., Partnership in Education Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria, Ude's Printing and Publishing Co; Onitsha, Nigeria, 1965, pp. 19-25.

<sup>10</sup>Solarin, T., An Answer to Rev. Francis Arinze's 'Partnership in Education Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria', The Caxton Press Ltd. Ibadan, n.d. p.7.

Catholicism and any forward looking modern society is impossible, particularly in education".<sup>11</sup>

The importance of Dr. Solarin's fifteen-page rejoinder to Dr. Arinze's pamphlet lies in its being representative of the popular opinion of the Nigerian elite class<sup>12</sup> at the time. The view was that since the cost of education was paid for by the Government and the local communities, it was right and proper for them to control and manage it to the exclusion of the Missionary Societies.

(ii) Related Official Publications

(a) Among the more related official publications is the Report of the Committee appointed by the Central Government in 1947 to review the system of Grants in Aid of Education in Nigeria. It was a two-man committee chaired by S. Phillipson, the former Financial Secretary to the Government and assisted by W.E. Holt, the then Chief Inspector of Education, Eastern Provinces (later, the Eastern Region). The Report, which is referred to as the 'Phillipson Report' in the rest of this study, is a valuable factual account of the early contributions of the Missions and the Colonial Government and the relationship between the two bodies in education in the whole of Nigeria.

Phillipson and his assistant traced the origin of the school system in the country from the beginning and the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the Government particularly in financial matters up to 1947. By the nature of this kind of work, no section of the country was treated in any great depth. Secondly, the Report dealt with the Colonial period and could not have treated the era of self-determination and independence and the conflicts of this period. All the same, it contains a lot of useful background materials and as will be seen later, the author is indebted to it for some information used in Chapters 3 and 4 of this study in particular.

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<sup>11</sup> ibid, p.16.

<sup>12</sup> See Nwosu, S.N. "Mission Schools in Africa" in The World Year Book of Education 1966; Church and State in Education, Evans Brothers Ltd; London, 1966, pp. 186-199.



(b) Another relevant official document was the Dike Commission Report.

The task of the Commission, appointed by the East Regional Government in 1958, was to review the system of education in Eastern Nigeria. The Report reviewed the development of education in the Region from 1948-58. The coming of the Missionaries and the establishment of the early schools were briefly mentioned in one paragraph. Its main concern was the positions of the Protestant and Catholic Missions on the issue of the Universal Primary Education (UPE) introduced in the Region in 1957, and the strengthening of local government participation in the management of primary schools. Both points are relevant to this study as some of the immediate causes of the disagreement between the Missions and the State soon after the introduction of responsible Government in the 1950's. We will come back to them in the appropriate place.

(c) Another related work in the official category was the Report of the Conference on the Review of the Educational System in Eastern Nigeria (the Ikoku Conference Report). It was appointed in 1962 by the Regional Government "to review the pattern and content of Primary, Secondary and Teacher Education in Eastern Nigeria". Among other aspects of the three levels of education, the Conference was to make recommendations on objectives, system of administration and financing. On primary and secondary education, it listed what it called "The weak spots in our system" and recommended that the management of the former be reorganised "on Provincial basis under the direction of Provincial Education Committees on which Voluntary Agencies<sup>13</sup> are represented."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> The term 'Voluntary Agency' as it applies to Nigerian Education is defined as "a person, mission, society, company, corporation, and any other body of persons who or which is proprietor of one or more institutions but does not include a local government council or local education authority". Wherever it is used in this study, it refers mainly to the Christian Missions. See Phillipson's Report, pp. 45-6; and Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. p. 11. The Catholic Mission however, rejected the term being applied to it and argued that it was in education by 'divine right' and not as an agent of the Government. If anything, the Mission could accept being referred to as the agent of parents. This same view was reiterated by Archbishop Arinze, the Head of the RCM in the former East Central State when the author interviewed him in December 1975.

<sup>14</sup> Ikoku Conference Report, p. 32.

The importance of the above Report lies in its detailed analysis of the main weaknesses of the partnership arrangement between the Missions and the Government in education and which this study will be re-examining in its section three. The Conference Report therefore touched on one of the problem areas covered by this investigation as of the time it was compiled.

(d) Finally on the official group of publications, a collective source of useful information on the activities of the Missions and the Government during the Colonial period is the various Nigeria, Annual Reports on the Education Department, Southern Provinces. Until the introduction of Responsible Government and the splitting of the country into Regions, the educational work of the two main agencies was annually reported and up-dated.

These documents contain a lot of factual information on the year to year developments in the field of education. No attempt however, was made to analyse and interpret the various major developments.

Some of the Reports that have been most valuable on the work of the Missions and the Government during that period are those of 1926 and 27, 1931, 1936, 1949, 1950/51 and 1951/2. Similar publications in later years by the Federal Government of Nigeria, the Government of former Eastern Region and those of its subsequent State Governments also contain a lot of information useful in some other respects.

All the valuable materials in this group of publications are in bits and pieces and available mainly in libraries and archives. As indicated earlier, it is a part of the practical objective of this study to pick and bring together these related and scattered records on the topic in one volume.

#### (iii) Works on Aspects of Education in Parts of Eastern Nigeria

In this group, only four works are of some interest:

(a) Rev. Father J.P. Jordan's Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria (Clonmore and Reynolds, Ltd.; Dublin, 1949). It is an account of the evangelical and the educational activities of the Roman Catholic Mission in the Eastern

parts of Nigeria from its arrival at Onitsha in 1884 till 1932. The book is centred on Bishop Shanahan who was the head of the Mission there from 1905 to 1932. As already stated, it is only on the work of the RCM, one of the four Missionary Societies, and only on a part of the period covered by this study. On the other hand, the author found the book a valuable source of information on the educational activities of the Mission during that period.

(b) The second related literature in this group is a contribution by P.E.B. Inyang entitled "Some Mission Schools in Eastern Nigeria Prior to Independence" in Brian Holmes' Educational Policy and the Mission Schools: Case Studies from the British Empire (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1967). The contribution presented the outline history of the coming of the Methodists, the CMS and the RCM to Eastern Nigeria, and their educational and medical activities up to 1960. It stressed the point that the Missions together, founded and managed most of the schools in the Region and as a result, were very powerful in educational matters. There was no mention of the conflicts between them and the Government, and the work of the CSM was also omitted.

(c) In an unpublished Ph.D. thesis on Education in Iboland: A Proposal for the Development of an Effective Ibo Culture Oriented System, submitted to the School of Education, Indiana University, 1970, H.N. Emeruwa examined the origin of the school system in Iboland and compared its content with the indigenous culture. He showed that the curricula (primary and secondary) were designed to project a foreign culture and not the indigenous one. According to him, the result of this was that the school taught values different from those of the traditional society and for this reason, the school products were torn between the two. He blamed the Missionaries and the Colonial Government for the foreign oriented nature of the school system.

The above work is of interest for two main reasons: first, its treatment of the origin of the school system and second, its analysis of the cultural values of the Ibos. On the first however, Emeruwa was rather brief and

covered only the Iboland, and on the second, he failed to bring out those aspects of the cultural values which made significant impact on the course of educational development in the area. It is in this respect that this study is interested in the culture not only of the Ibos but also of the other ethnic groups in Eastern Nigeria which was outside the purview of the work under review.

(d) Another relevant work is F.K. Ekechi's Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, (Frank Cass: London, 1971). As its title suggests, the book covers only the Igboland for that fifty-seven year period. It does not include the other ethnic groups which also live in the Eastern parts of Nigeria (see infra Chapter 2.2), or the role of Government which was not yet firmly established by that date. Secondly, the book is mainly on the activities of the CMS and the RCM in and around Onitsha and Owerri Provinces. It does not include those of the CSM and the Methodists. On the other hand, Ekechi's work is a comprehensive and scholarly account of missionary activities in those parts of Eastern Nigeria during those early years and the author is indebted to it for information on that stage in the development of the school system, particularly, on the early beginnings of the rivalry between the CMS and the RCM.

(iv) Works on Parts or the Whole of Nigeria, or Africa in General:

Of the many works in this group,<sup>15</sup> only two are considered sufficiently

<sup>15</sup> Some other standard works which also discuss aspects of Church and State in education in Nigeria as a whole are: Hilliard, F.H., A Short History of Education in British West Africa, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., London, 1957; Lewis, L.J. (ed.), Phelps-Stokes Reports on Education in Africa, Oxford University Press, London, 1962; Ikejiani, O. et al., Nigerian Education, Longmans Nigeria Ltd. 1964; Nduka, O., Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background, Oxford University Press, 1964; Lewis, L.J., Society, School and Progress in Nigeria, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1965; Ajayi, J.F.A., Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891: The Making of a New Elite, Longmans, 1965; Ukeje, B.O., Education for Social Reconstruction, Macmillan (Nigeria) Ltd; Lagos, 1966; Ayandele, E.A. The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914, Longmans, 1966; Nwosù, S.N. 'Mission Schools in Africa' in World Year Book of Education 1966: Church and State in Education, loc. cit. Ibim, G.M., Federal Government and the Development of Education in Nigeria: 1951-65, an unpublished Ph.D. thesis submitted to University of California, Los Angeles, 1968; and Fafunwa, A.B., History of Education in Nigeria, George Allen and Unwin Ltd; London, 1974.

relevant as previous literature. The first is R.D. Carey's Church-Sponsored Education and National Development in Nigeria, (Ph.D. Dissertation, Stanford University, 1969). As its title suggests, this study was on Nigeria as a whole. It examined the relationship between Church-sponsored education and national development focussing attention on the following topics:

- (a) the objectives and performance of Church-sponsored education;
- (b) the goals of national political leaders and the nation; and (c) the compatibility of religious motivation and national development.

Dr. Carey showed that the prime motive of the Missionaries who pioneered education in Nigeria was evangelization, and that for more than half a century, the school system was under their direct and exclusive control. Even at independence in 1960, about 70 per cent of the schools and their enrolment in the country were controlled by the Churches.

On the other hand, the nationalist leaders, most of whom were products of the Church schools, had different objectives for education. These included political advancement and economic development, and for building up support for their political parties.

In spite of the differences between the educational motivations of the Church and the national leaders, there was a higher degree of co-operation between them in the Western Region than in the East. Some of the reasons for this was that in the former, the leaders of both groups were almost one and the same people and so, planned and consulted together for educational expansion; secondly, as a body, the Church was not so powerful.

But in the case of the East, the political leaders regarded the Missionaries (expatriates) as their political opponents and so, would not consult with them, and also pursued a policy of curbing the influence of the Voluntary Agencies in education. In addition, and unlike the West, the Catholics were in the majority in the East and very powerful.

The case of the Northern Region was different from either the West or the East. There, the original policy of indirect rule did not make it

possible for the Missions to have as much influence in education as in the South, particularly the Eastern Region.

The vast nature of Nigeria as a whole, and its regional and ethnic differences made it difficult for Dr. Carey to treat his topic as it applied to any of the component parts of the country, in great detail. The same regional variations would not also permit generalizations in respect of the whole country. In addition, the study was not so much concerned with the relationship between the Churches and the Governments - the topic very much emphasized in this research in relation to Eastern Nigeria.

"Church-Sponsored Education and National Development in Nigeria" is therefore, a useful related reference work on the country as a whole. But on its part, this study emphasizes the development, role and relationship between Church and State in education in a particular section of Nigeria. In addition, while Dr. Carey's work covered 1842 to 1966 for the whole country, this study covers 1847 to 1975 for Eastern Nigeria only.

The second work considered sufficiently relevant as a previous literature is David Abernethy's scholarly book on The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case (Stanford University Press, California, 1969). It is on Southern Nigeria of which the East is a part. Its areas of concentration are on the rapid expansion of education in the territory after the introduction of Responsible Governments and its counter-productive effects. The author considers the factors that influenced the course of educational development during the period. The UPE schemes in both the Western and the Eastern Regions, the political motives behind their introduction, the economic and social problems caused by them and the reactions of both the Missionary Societies and the Governments. The main events described and analysed in the book took place between 1951 and 1965.

The aim of the above survey and the list of standard works on Nigerian education which touch on Church and State in the country as a whole,

has been to show that there is yet no previous work, known to the author, similar to this investigation on the topic, the geographical area and the period covered by it. Although aspects of 'Church and State' in Nigerian education are either mentioned in passing or treated, often very superficially, for parts of the period covered by this study in some of the above works, no previous investigation of this type has yet been carried out on the topic. It is from this angle that it was earlier stated that this study is the first of its kind in respect of the geographical area known as Eastern Nigeria.

#### E. Method of Investigation

This study is set in a historical framework. The major educational events in relation to the roles and the functions of the Missionary Societies and the Governments in the provision, control and management of the primary and secondary school system are described and analysed.

The period covered in general (1847-1975), falls into three divisions. The first is the Colonial Phase, 1847-1950; the second, the Era of Responsible Government and Independence, 1951-1965; and the third, the Period of the National Crisis and State Take-Over of the Schools, 1966-1975. Each of the three periods has its own distinctive features in the arrangement for the provision, control and management of the education system.

To show what actually happened and why, the arrangement during each of the above three periods is described and analysed in relation to the underlying forces operating and influencing the course of events. In the end, the distinctive features of the different arrangements under which the school system has operated are re-examined in order to highlight their similarities and differences, strengths and weaknesses, and to see if there are aspects of the system prior to 1965 that could be recommended for beneficial integration into the present arrangement.

## F. Sources of Data and Methods of Collection

### (i) Sources of Data

#### (a) Primary Sources

A full list of the documents consulted, the people who were interviewed and those on whom questionnaires were administered is recorded in individual chapter references and notes, the bibliography and the appendix. But in general outline, the primary sources include the Central Government and the East Regional and State Governments' Annual Reports on education, administrative records from both the Ministries of Education and the National Archives, policy statements, parliamentary debates, educational laws and regulations, reports of commissions of inquiry and seminars, official gazettes, the minutes of the East Regional Board of Education, 1956-65, newspaper and journal articles representing public opinion.

A second primary source was the surviving records of the Missionary Societies. While most of the Government records were available and accessible, most of those of the Missions were either lost or badly mutilated during the thirty months of the Nigerian civil war. For this reason, the author could not get all the information he wanted from this source. As an alternative, he consulted earlier works on the activities of the different Missions, interviewed their present heads, former Education Secretaries, Managers of Schools and Supervisors. In all, eleven such people were interviewed and in addition, some of them kindly allowed the author to examine the relevant records they still possessed (see Appendix 1).

A third major source of information was from the interviews with the former and present leaders and officials of the Missionary Societies, a former Minister of Education in the Eastern Region of Nigeria,<sup>16</sup> top officials of the Ministries of Education and the State School Management Boards of the then three Eastern States (see Appendix 2) and heads of some primary and secondary schools and visits to them too (see Appendix 3). While some of

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<sup>16</sup>see next page.



the present Church leaders were rather cautious in answering some of the author's questions, the Government officials talked more freely.

The cautious attitude of some of the Church leaders can be explained by the enigma which has been hanging over them since the end of the civil war. The Missionary Societies were said to have taken sides with the Biafran secessionist regime, and they claim that the take-over of their schools was an act of vendetta against them for their role during the crisis. This allegation was so often repeated during the interviews with the Church leaders that attempt is made in Section Four of this study to see what evidence there is to substantiate or disprove it. With the consent of the people concerned, some of the interviews were tape recorded.

One major effect of the refusal of the Church leaders to speak freely on the immediate cause of the State take-over of their schools apart from the old quarrels, is that this study may not have been able to get the full Missionary version on this particular aspect of the issues involved. This was to be expected in view of the prevailing political atmosphere in the country and the recency of the action itself. On the Government side, the official reasons were readily repeated and made available in print. Whether or not there was more to these as the Christian Missions strongly suspect, will be a matter for further research when the times are right.

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<sup>16</sup>The author made efforts to reach the four individuals, R.I. Uzoma, I.U. Akpabio, G.E. Okeke and S.E. Imoke who served as Ministers of Education in the former Eastern Region of Nigeria between 1951 and 1965. On investigation, he found out that the second as listed above, was dead, and that the last two were outside the country. Only the first was available. He kindly granted an interview to the author and answered his questions freely. He later invited the author to his home in his village to look through his records and files as a Minister of Education, Member of the Regional Board of Education, and Education Secretary and General Manager of Schools for CMS. At the time the interview took place, Mr. Uzoma was a member of the East Central State Teachers Service Commission. The author also interviewed and got some documents from Dr. M.C. Adiele, who was the Commissioner for Education at the time the school system was nationalized in the former East Central State of Nigeria now divided into Anambra and Imo States.

The fourth primary source was by means of questionnaires to a sample of heads of primary and secondary institutions, and the Secretaries of the Divisional School Management Boards on the actual working of the state school system since it was introduced. The primary objectives of the questionnaires were to get from source whether or not the alleged problems of the partnership arrangement had been, or were being, eliminated by the new system of control and management; and what the heads of institutions and the Secretaries, who were actually administering it, saw as its strengths and weaknesses. The information from this source was meant to supplement what the author had seen and got from his interviews with some of the institutional heads and visits to their schools. Copies of the three different questionnaires are attached as appendices 4, 5 and 6. The overall response and analyses are given in Chapter 10.6

Finally, and as was indicated earlier, the author also drew from his personal experience, first, as a product of the school system (primary and secondary), second, as a primary and secondary school teacher in different parts of Eastern Nigeria, third, as an Education Officer soon after the civil war and finally as a Lecturer in one of the Colleges of Education in Eastern Nigeria for the training of primary and secondary school teachers.

#### (b) Secondary Sources

Other sources consulted in addition to the primary ones as outlined above, include standard textbooks and the works of leading authorities on

Church and State in Education in different parts of the world. Some of them were more useful than others and a few of the outstanding ones were:

The World Year Book of Education 1966, Church and State in Education, mentioned earlier. It is a composite collection of national and historical studies, theoretical and practical problems and short reports from different countries in all the five continents of the world on different aspects of Church and State in education; Brickman and Lehrer (eds.) Religion, Government and Education (Society for the Advancement of Education, New York, 1961), is an earlier publication than the World Year Book and the two works are similar in content. Of particular value however, was Brickman's contribution in the collection entitled "Church, State and School in International Perspective". In the 104-page article, he traced the history of Church and State in Education from the ancient to the modern times, and summarized the contemporary arrangements in more than thirty different countries drawn from all the continents and regions of the world.

Other works that were particularly useful in our general survey of the topic were: Boyd, and King; The History of Western Education (London, 1972); Lester-Smith; The Government of Education (Penguin, England, 1965); Hans, Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1958); Bernard; A History of English Education from 1760, (University of London Press, 1971); Maclure; Educational Documents England and Wales 1816 to the Present, (London, 1973); Hans, Principles of Educational Policy, (London, 1929); Scanlon; (ed.) Church, State and Education in Africa, (New York, 1966); Taylor, and Saunders; The New Law of Education (London, 1971); Dent; The Educational System of England and Wales, (London, 1971); Murphy; Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800-1970, (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1971); Cowan; The Cost of Learning: The Politics of Primary Education in Kenya, (New York, 1970) and McWilliam, and Kwamena-Poh; The Development of Education in Ghana (Longmans, 1975). The others in relation to Nigeria itself and other parts of Africa included the works reviewed or

mentioned under our survey of previous literature. There are many others which are neither mentioned here nor there. Among them were books, journals, newspapers and miscellaneous publications and unpublished printed materials. In all cases, the source of information is duly acknowledged in its appropriate place.

In addition to the general works on education as outlined above, secondary materials were also derived from other sources particularly, in relation to the chapter on the physical, social, political, religious and economic background of Eastern Nigeria. The most useful in this category were: Floyd; Eastern Nigeria: A Geographical Review (Macmillan, London, 1969); Church; Geographies for Advanced Studies: West Africa, (Longmans, London, 1974); Forde, and Jones; The Ibo and Ibibio-Speaking Peoples of South-Eastern Nigeria, (Oxford University Press, 1950); Uchendu; The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria, (New York, 1965); Ezera; Constitutional Development in Nigeria, (Cambridge University Press, 1964); Caldwell, and Okonjo (eds.); The Population of Tropical Africa (London, 1968); Dike; 100 Years of British Rule in Nigeria, 1851-1951, (Lagos, 1958); Crowther; The Story of Nigeria, (London, 1962); Ostheimer; Nigerian Politics (New York, 1973); Anene, Southern Nigeria in Transition 1885-1906 (Cambridge University Press, 1966); and Alagoa; The Small Brave City State: A History of Nembe-Brass in the Delta, (University of Ibadan Press, 1964). There are some others not mentioned above for lack of space but duly acknowledged either in the main body of the thesis or at the general bibliography as the case may be.

#### (ii) Methods of Data Collection

From the outline of the primary sources, it is clear that they are mainly located in Nigeria. This meant a trip home for the purposes of data collection. The University of London Institute of Education kindly granted the author a six-month leave of absence (July-December, 1975) after one academic year as a full-time student.

Before embarking on the research trip, the author in consultation with

his Supervisor and the Institute's Data Processing Centre, drew up a tentative outline for the study, the questionnaires to be administered and the questions to be used for the interviews. The information derived from this source is used in the main body of the thesis particularly in Chapter Ten. An abridged form of the questions is attached as Appendix 7. In addition, his Supervisor had earlier despatched letters of introduction to the officials of the Ministries of Education and the State School Management Boards whom the author proposed to meet in the then three States of the former Eastern Region. He was also given another letter of introduction to others outside the official circles.

On arrival in Nigeria, the author sent out letters to all those he wanted to meet suggesting different dates to each of them. He also enclosed copies of the questions for the interview and a list of the type of information he was seeking. When everything was fixed, he travelled to meet the people in their offices and some in their homes.

In the case of the Ministries of Education and the State School Management Boards, the author first of all met their administrative heads. After discussing with them, he was introduced to such sectional heads as: Research and Planning Division, the Inspectorate Division, Primary, Secondary, School Finance and Examinations Divisions. Others were: the Divisional School Management Department, Teachers' Service Commission and Teachers' Disciplinary Councils. In most cases, at the end of discussions with the Sectional Heads, another officer was appointed to help the author gain access to relevant files and documents. In other cases, he was asked to make a list of the data he wanted and to come back a few days later to collect them. Work in every section was rounded off with a second meeting with its Head for any yet unanswered questions. In all the discussions, the information sought was on aspects of the school system before and after the take-over, particularly, the series of conflicts between Church and State in education, the control and the management of the school system, reasons for its nationalization, functions, duties and problems of the individual sections.

It was from this source mainly that information on Government version of the story was collected.

The interviews with the Church leaders, former Mission Education Secretaries, Managers of Schools and Supervisors, the former Ministers of Education and Heads of primary and secondary schools were similarly structured. The questions were sent to them in advance and at the end of the actual interview, extra time - in some cases days - were spent going through available records and making notes.

In the case of the questionnaires, three different ones were administered: the first on Heads of Primary schools, the second on Secondary School Principals and the third on the Secretaries of the Divisional School Management Boards (DSMB) created under the state school system of management and control. The actual administration of the questionnaires was done in three different ways:

(a) In the case of the ones for Heads of Institutions, a set was personally handed over to them and also collected after some days. This was followed with individual discussions with some of them on the conflicts, the take-over and its effects on their schools. Before all this, the author had explained to them what the research was all about and the co-operation he was asking from them. This method was made possible by the fact that at the material time, the Headmasters and Principals from different parts of Eastern Nigeria were gathered at Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri for a six-week refresher course on School Administration under the new state system. The author spent two weeks with them at the course centre and later visited some of them in their schools.

(b) Soon after his arrival in Nigeria, the author recruited three assistants drawn from University and College of Education student teachers on summer vacation. He trained them for two days on what he wanted them to do, and later travelled to Owerri with them so that they could watch him administer the first set of questionnaires on the Headmasters and Principals on course there. For another one week after that, they accompanied the author to other

schools for the same purpose.

(c) The third set of questionnaires were sent out by post with addressed stamped envelopes for their return mail. In all, while nearly all the questionnaires administered in person by either the author or his assistants were completed as much as was possible and returned, the response from the set sent to schools by post was about forty per cent. But in the case of the ones to the Secretaries of the DSMB all of which were sent by post too, more than 60 per cent of them responded. The full details of the questionnaires are given in their analysis in Chapter 10.6 of this study.

Finally, in the course of gathering materials for this study, the author made extensive use of the libraries of the University of London Institute of Education, the Senate House, the School of Oriental, African Studies and the Official Publications Division of the British Library. Information was also collected from those of the Unesco Institute for Educational Planning, Paris; University of Nigeria, Nsukka; Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri and the Ministry of Education Enugu. Other useful sources were: the National Archives, Enugu, the National Library, Lagos, the Federal Ministry of Education, Lagos, and the State Ministries of Education in Benin, Calabar, Enugu, Ibadan and Port Harcourt. Some related official publications were obtained from the Government Printers in Lagos and the above named state capitals.

#### G. Organisation

This study is organised in four sections and in all, there are eleven chapters including a final one on summary, conclusions and comments on the past, present and future arrangements for the management and the control of the school system. Each of the ten main chapters is divided into, and presented under appropriate sub-topic headings.

Section One has two chapters. The first discusses the issue of Church

and State in education in Western Europe and some other parts of the world including recent arrangements in some other English-speaking African countries like Nigeria, and the concept and the practice of planning, control and management of education. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a basis for examining and analysing the partnership arrangement and the State system in Eastern Nigeria from the point of view of established practices and illustrations from different religious, political and cultural backgrounds in the world. The second chapter deals with the physical, political, religious, social and economic aspects of the geographical area covered by this study and is intended to provide the background to the school system under investigation.

Section Two, which is entitled 'The Colonial Phase: 1847-1950' is made up of Chapters Three and Four. The third examines the coming of the four Missionary Societies into Eastern Nigeria, the foundations of the modern school system and the beginning of Government participation in education from 1847 to 1929. The fourth chapter discusses the Societies' educational activities, their consolidation and the policy of partnership between the Missions and the Colonial Government from 1930 to 1950, a year before the introduction of Responsible Government in the whole of Nigeria.

The four chapters which make up Section Three deal with the East Regional Government, the Missionary Societies and education from 1951 to 1965. The first chapter in this section and the fifth in the study, examines the constitutional and political developments; the educational policies and laws; and their implications for the school system; and its development between 1951 and 1956. Chapter Six describes and analyses the political and the economic scene and educational development from 1957 to 1965. The seventh chapter is on the implementation of the nationalist government educational policies and laws, and the reaction of the Missionary Societies up to 1959. Chapter Eight deals with the relationship between the Missions and the Regional Government from the year of national



independence, 1960 to 1965.

Section Four has three chapters. The first re-examines the main charges against the partnership arrangement between Church and State in education in the light of available evidence and conditions in which it operated. The tenth chapter, the second in the section, is on the national crisis, education and the state take-over of the schools, 1966 to 1975. In this chapter, the effects of the crisis and the civil war on the school system, the laws by which it was nationalized, the reactions of the Missionary Societies and the general public and the state school system 1970-75, are examined. Chapter Eleven and the last, outlines the main conclusions of this study, and makes comments on the past, the present and future arrangements for the management and the control of the school system in Eastern Nigeria. The final chapter is followed by the appendices and next to this is the general bibliography.

CHAPTER ONE  
CHURCH, GOVERNMENT AND EDUCATION IN HISTORICAL AND INTERNATIONAL  
PERSPECTIVES

Introduction

The struggle between Church<sup>1</sup> and State over which of them should manage and direct education is, to say the least, very old. All through the ages the Church has consistently maintained that as the custodian of moral values, it is its duty to teach both the young and the old. It also claims that the religious bodies are the best qualified to decide what is moral and what is not. Individual religious groups also claim that their own teachings are more authoritative and reflect the best way of worshipping the true God than those of their rivals. In addition, they want to control education in order to ensure their continued and effective influence over their members and for the stability of their organisations as distinct religious groups. They argue that it is only by this means that it is possible to exercise spiritual influence over generations of human beings. The religious bodies also believe that by the nature of their calling, they should be allowed effective voice and influence in political, business and cultural matters. They maintain that unless this is done, these areas of human activity may not be conducted along the lines of accepted codes of morality.

On its part, the modern nation-states claim that they have their own morality to teach. Each citizen must be taught his duties and obligations to the political society in such areas as obedience to laws, loyalty to

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<sup>1</sup>The word 'Church' is used in this context as a collective noun for 'all the religious sects and denominations devoted to the worship of God through the acceptance of Jesus Christ as the son of God and Saviour of Mankind'. See Barrie, J.R., The Church and State in Education in the Light of the Ecumenical Movement (an unpublished Ph.D. thesis) University of London, 1963, pp. 10-11.

the nation, his rights and privileges. Although these claims are not entirely different from those of the Church, particularly in the case of a theocratic state, or in a religiously homogeneous nation, all the same, Church and State have often been in conflict over the provision and control of education.

The claims of either of the two parties are often weakened by their actions when in power. For instance, the Church often does this by being extremely conservative in educational matters. In countries where it enjoys political authority or patronage, it often displays 'crude intolerance' of religious views opposed to those of its own. Catholic Spain, Portugal and Peru are good examples of this. On the other hand, wherever the Church is in the minority or has no political power or influence, it presents itself as the champion of free speech, individual liberty and of the oppressed as the Catholic Church did earlier in the history of education in the United States, Australia and New Zealand. The Church further weakens its claims by lack of 'spiritual zeal' among its leaders and members, and excessive fanaticism whenever it chooses.

On their part, Governments have often weakened their claim to control and direct education by using schools as an instrument of indoctrination and for the achievement of the political ambition of the group in power as was the case in Nazi Germany. Schools have often been used to prepare nations for unnecessary and costly wars. There have been cases of states using their control of education to suppress individual freedom as in the communist countries and to keep a particular group in political power by teaching the younger generation only such ideologies and values considered essential for the achievement of this objective.

Because in the modern world, "the State is everywhere more powerful than the Churches",<sup>2</sup> the role of the latter in education is increasingly determined

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<sup>2</sup>Bereday, G.Z.F. and J.A. Lauwerys (eds.), "Editors' Introduction", The World Year Book of Education 1966 Church and State in Education, Evans Brothers, Ltd, London, 1966, p. xiii.

by those in political authority. Where they are supported by the State, the Churches play significant role in education. But in places where they are not, they are either completely excluded or struggle on their own to provide and run an independent school system for their members.

The major areas of conflict between Church and State in education are: (a) the teaching of denominational religion in public schools; (b) management of Church-related school supported from public funds; (c) appointment of staff; and (d) whether public funds are to be expended on schools controlled by the Churches. In general terms, these are issues of educational management and financing. Individual countries have worked out different solutions to these problem areas. For example, and as will be shown later in this chapter, on the issue of religious teaching in public schools, there are such solutions as its total prohibition as in the USSR; its partial ban as in the USA, making it optional as in Turkey; the principle of 'agreed' religious syllabus as in England and Wales; or making it compulsory in all such schools as in Spain. On financing, arrangements range from full state support as in the Netherlands; to the French policy of partial support; the USA indirect token support and total ban on public support for parochial schools as in Japan. All these arrangements and some others are discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

The above outline background of the nature of the conflict in its universal setting - the claims of both Church and State and the major areas around which the dispute revolves, is to be borne in mind while we examine the history of educational provision and the arrangements in different countries for its support and management. Our historical survey is limited to Western Europe in general and the United Kingdom in particular. There are two main reasons for this approach:

(i) Many contemporary countries of the world including Nigeria, owe their Christian and modern school traditions to Western Europe in particular and the continent in general. It was on European tradition that Christianity

and formal school education in modern America, Australia, Asia and Africa were founded. The trend of development in these places was greatly influenced by experiences and practices in Europe.

(ii) In the case of Nigeria in particular, and as will be shown in the next section of this study, formal school education was introduced and developed mainly by Christian Missionaries and officials from the United Kingdom. Inevitably, the relationship between Church and State in education followed a pattern similar to that which prevailed in England at the time. For this reason, there was close affinity between the educational systems and policies in both countries till about Nigeria's Independence from Great Britain in 1960. The history of the development of state participation in education in the United Kingdom therefore, is of special relevance to Nigeria in general and the study area in particular. For the above reason too, there will be constant references to policies and practices in England particularly, in section two of this study which deals with the period of Colonial Administration.

Part of the purpose of this chapter is to focus attention on the types of relationship which have existed between Church and State in education down the centuries and the contemporary practices in some countries of the world. This is intended to provide us with a framework for evaluating the development of the school system in Eastern Nigeria and for analysing and interpreting the conflict over its management and control in the light of historical precedents and established practices from among different countries of the world. It is true that circumstances - political, cultural, economic and religious, differ from one place to another. All the same, the knowledge of a similar problem as it applies to other places in the world will, at least, make for better understanding of the conflict as it has existed in Eastern Nigeria.

The chapter itself is presented in three main sections. The first deals with the history of Church and State in education in Western Europe.

The second has two sub-divisions. The first examines the traditional attitudes of the four Christian Missions in Eastern Nigeria as illustrated by their reactions in other countries where they have been involved in similar dispute with the state in education. The need for this will be discussed in the section itself. The second sub-division is on the international illustration of past and contemporary main policies for the provision and management of education. This is a part of the overall framework discussed above. The third section examines some of the basic principles and practices of planning, control and management in relation to school systems as those were the areas where the voluntary agency participation was alleged to be obstructing the educational policies and objectives of the Governments. We will elaborate more on this topic later in this chapter and in the ninth one.

On the whole, the aim of this chapter is to provide a background world view of Church and State in education against which the description of the main course of educational development and its stresses up to the nationalization of the school system in Eastern Nigeria are to be analysed, interpreted and evaluated.

## 1.1 OUTLINE HISTORY OF CHURCH AND STATE IN EDUCATION

### 1.1.1. Western Europe

There is abundant literature on the relationship between Church and State in Education.<sup>3</sup> But because of the complexity of the subject only a brief survey is attempted here. As was indicated earlier, the account is limited to Western Europe in general and the United Kingdom in particular.

Until the sixteenth century, the notion that the responsibility for education belonged to the Church, was generally accepted throughout the Christian World. Even after the Reformation which came into the open in 1517 had split the unity of Western Christendom, the notion still remained virtually unchallenged.<sup>4</sup> Civil authority and the Church were not conceived as two separate entities. Instead, they were regarded as complementary parts of one body - the social order. Whenever the two disagreed, as they often did earlier than the sixteenth century,<sup>5</sup> it was not on the right of the Church to teach but on the political aspects of the relationship between them. They both accepted that the task of education belonged to the Church.<sup>6</sup>

But with the break-up of the 'Universality of the Church', the leaders of the Reformation Movement turned to the monarchs of Europe for alliance and urged them not only to take over the Church in their Kingdoms but

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<sup>3</sup>Some of the more recent scholarly accounts include: The World Year Book of Education 1966 Church and State in Education (op. cit.). The book treats the topic in relation to thirty-five countries drawn from all the continents of the world. In addition, there are three chapters on theoretical aspects of the problem as they apply to Europe and the United States of America. For a review of the topic in World perspective, see the "Editors' General Introduction" pp. 1-18; Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education (10th edition), Adam and Charles Black, London, 1972, chapters IV and VIII in particular; Lester-Smith, W.O., The Government of Education, Penguin Books, Ltd, Middlesex, England, 1965. (The whole book); Brickman, W.W.; 'Church, State and School in International Perspective' in Brickman, W.W.; and Stanley Lehrer, Religion, Government and Education, Society for the Advancement of Education, New York, 1961, pp. 144-247.

<sup>4</sup>Lester-Smith, W.O. The Government of Education, op. cit. p. 53.

<sup>5</sup>Between the eleventh and sixteenth centuries, there were many instances of such disagreements in Western Europe between the Church and the Empire. Cf. Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.) Religion, Government and Education op. cit. 147-150 and Lester-Smith, W.O. To Whom Do Schools Belong? Basil Blackwell, Oxford, 1943, p. 28.

<sup>6</sup>"Editor's General Introduction", World Year Book of Education 1966, op.cit. pp. 2-3.

also its function of education.<sup>7</sup> The Reformation leaders argued that the civil authorities, as much as the Church, needed the service of schools, and for this reason, both of them should be taken over by the State. This argument was clearly stated by Martin Luther in his address 'To the Magistrates of All German Towns' in 1524. He said inter alia:

'We have talked enough about the usefulness and the necessity of Christian languages and schools for the spiritual life and the salvation of the soul. Let us now consider the body and act as if there were no soul, no heaven, no hell. Let us ask ourselves, examining only temporary government as it presents itself to a worldly point of view, whether it does not need good schools and learned men even more than the spiritual government does . . .',<sup>8</sup>

The immediate result of Luther's call was the secularization of education by those princes and scholars who had broken with the Roman Church and adopted the Protestant Faith. In Germany for example, Maurice of Saxony dissolved the monasteries and deployed their endowments in the establishment of new schools "financed and controlled by the States with a view to their own social needs".<sup>9</sup> An eminent German scholar, Philip Melanchthon (1497-1560), who devoted his life organising the new schools, called on parents and the community in 1526 to accept the obligation of educating the youth.<sup>10</sup>

In this way, the split in Church unity also marked the beginning of the conflict over the control of education. Since then, the issue has remained very much alive. On their part, the Reformation leaders believed that their desired system of education would be achieved through the "subordination of the Church to the State",<sup>11</sup> and not the other way round as

<sup>7</sup>Lester-Smith, W.O., To Whom Do Schools Belong? loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup>Quoted in Voeltzel, R. "Religion and the Question of Rights Philosophic and Legal Problems in European Tradition" in World Year Book of Education, 1966, op. cit. pp. 225-6.

<sup>9</sup>Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education, op. cit. p. 190 ff.

<sup>10</sup>ibid, p. 194.

<sup>11</sup>Brickman, W.W. and Stanley Lehrer (eds.); Religion, Government and Education, op. cit. p. 149.



it was before. That was the ground on which they appealed to monarchs of Europe to break with Rome and take over the headship of the Church in their countries.

For reasons more political than either religious or educational, the prospects of such change in the status quo were irresistible to many of the kings. They therefore took up the challenge, broke with Rome and set up national Churches subservient to their authority. After nearly forty years of bitter struggle, the state won its battle of supremacy over the Church. In 1555, the Religious Peace Treaty of Augsburg sanctioned the doctrine of 'Cuius regio, eius religio'.<sup>12</sup>

For the countries whose monarchs had broken with Rome, the implication of the Treaty to education lay in the fact that from that date, it was no more to be controlled by "an international, universalist authority" as was represented by the Roman Catholic Church before the break-up. It was thence to be the responsibility of the favoured or national Church of each country subservient to its monarch. It is important to bear in mind that as yet, there was no question of excluding the Church from education. It was only a matter of displacing one form of Christian Church by another, this time, under the authority of the King.<sup>13</sup>

In England and Holland for example, Catholic schools were prohibited and only those of the Church approved by the King were allowed to function. The canon of 1604 by the Convocation of Canterbury under James I of England (1603-25), clearly illustrates the continued monopoly of education by the religion of the King. Under the canon, the qualification and conditions for appointment to the post of the schoolmaster were outlined as follows:

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<sup>12</sup> ibid, loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup> Editor's 'General Introduction' World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. p. 5.

'the bishop's licence, attendance at Church, recognition of the authority of the Crown in matters ecclesiastical as well as civil and acknowledgement of the authority of the Church of England'; which was established in the previous century by King Henry VIII after his break with Rome following the Reformation and his quarrels with the Roman Church.<sup>14</sup>

The same practice was evident in Scotland, another country that also broke with Rome and adopted a national religion. After the passage of the "Confession of Faith" and the "Severance Act with the Church of Rome" by the Scottish Parliament in 1560, John Knox published his 'First Book of Discipline'. In it, he proposed a system of education controlled by the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.<sup>15</sup> As will be shown later in this chapter, the proposal was adopted and implemented not only in that country but also in some other Presbyterian States on both sides of the Atlantic.

The above state of affairs was, however, only a passing phase and a prelude to another stage in the relationship between Church and State in Education. By the seventeenth century, monopoly by a national or favoured Church had begun to give way to toleration of other religious groups. Patriotism had ceased to be measured by adherence to a particular creed and the religious opinion of individuals was increasingly becoming less a matter for public concern. Church and State were no longer seen as one indivisible entity as was the case earlier. All these happened as a result of the fact that the new nation states had emerged as the superior authority in all matters within their boundaries including religion and education. Every institution had become subject to their will.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Lester-Smith, W.O., Government of Education, op. cit. p. 60.

<sup>15</sup>Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education, op. cit., p. 201.

<sup>16</sup>"Editor's General Introduction", World Year Book of Education, 1966, loc. cit.

In their new status as lord of all things within the realm, the monarchs, in both Catholic and Protestant countries of Europe, were prepared to tolerate more than one religious group in education. This change of attitude was reflected by the terms of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) by which the issues in dispute and which led to the Thirty Years War were settled. Under the Treaty, there was to be equal treatment of Catholics and Protestants including the provision of subsidies for schools, in the countries still under the Holy Roman Empire. The Treaty also reaffirmed the old notion by noting that the school was an "annexum religionis" and by allowing both the Catholics and the Protestants to retain the schools and churches they possessed as of 1642. A similar policy was adopted in Austria by her "Toleration Edict" of 1781 although Catholicism was recognised as the dominant faith.<sup>17</sup>

Although the dominant role of the Church continued even after the eighteenth century, before then however, some secular schools by charitable organisations, foundations and monarchs had already come into existence as will be shown in the case of England later in this chapter. But by the turn of the century, the Enlightenment Movement and the French Revolution both combined to usher in the third stage. Both events led to demands for an end to multi-denominational management and control, and for state take-over of schools. In France<sup>18</sup> for example, the ground for the approaching stage was prepared by the writings of its several leading citizens. One of them was La Chalotais of Brittany who, in his "Essay on National Education" (1764), called on the French Government to take over education. He declared:

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<sup>17</sup>Brickman, W.W. & S. Lehrer (eds.); Religion, Government and Education, op. cit. pp. 150-151.

<sup>18</sup>France did not break with Rome in the same way as England and some German States after the Reformation, and did not establish a national Church as England and Scotland.

"I venture to claim for the nation an education which depends on the State, because it is essentially a matter for the State, because every nation has an inalienable right to instruct its members, because, in a word, the children of the State ought to be brought up by members of the State".<sup>19</sup>

La Chalotais's call was followed by several publications<sup>20</sup> by other eminent French reformers and educators supporting the view. This issue continued to be debated till after the French Revolution in 1789 when "the matter passed out of the region of theoretical discussion into that of legislation". Its full implementation, however, was not effected till 1808 when Napoleon decreed that:

"no school, no establishment of instruction whatsoever may be set up outside the imperial University and without the authorization of the head".<sup>21</sup>

Since that date and as will be shown in the next section of this chapter, various forms of arrangement, ranging from total ban on Church schools to the present partial public support for them, have existed in French education. At the same time, the state has remained the supreme authority in educational matters.<sup>22</sup>

About the same period, similar demand was made on governments to nationalize schools in Germany. One of its results was the fundamental law of Prussia (1794) which stated that:

"Schools and Universities are state institutions charged with the instruction of the youth in useful information and scientific

<sup>19</sup>Quoted in Boyd, W. and E.J. King; History of Western Education, op.cit.p.302.

<sup>20</sup>Some of the more outstanding publications in support of State take-over of education in France were: Rolland's "Report to the Parliament of Paris" (1768); Rousseau's "Considerations on the Government of Poland" (1772); Helvetius's "Memoirs to the King" (1775); and Diderot's "Plan for a University" to the Empress of Russia (1776). See ibid, p. 312.

<sup>21</sup>Editor's 'General Introduction' World Year Book of Education 1966, op.cit.p.6.

<sup>22</sup>For an account of Church and State in French education since 1789, see Mallinson, V., 'Church and State in French Education' ibid pp. 67-77; Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.), Religion, Government and Education op. cit. pp. 166-173; and Hans, N; Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., London (3rd ed.) 1958, pp. 290-6.

knowledge. Such institutions may be founded only with the knowledge and consent of the state".<sup>23</sup>

As in France, different forms of relationship have also existed between Church and State in German education since that date.<sup>24</sup> At present, the two Germanies operate different educational policies. In the West, the state is the senior partner, and in the East, there is total ban on Church schools.

Thus, by the first decade of the nineteenth century, a movement towards state take-over of schools or dominant role in their management and control had taken roots in some European countries. Its development in England from where formal school education was exported to Nigeria will now be examined more closely.

#### 1.1.2 An Outline History of Church and State in English Education

About the same time as the Reformation Crusade was taking place on the Continent of Europe, King Henry VIII of England broke with Rome and established a national Church subservient to his authority. Catholicism was banned and its schools closed down leaving education firmly under the monopoly of the Anglican Church. This policy was ruthlessly enforced till the seventeenth century when the puritan reformers under Cromwell, started a campaign for State take-over of education. One of its chief advocates was

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<sup>23</sup>Editor's 'General Introduction' World Year Book of Education 1966, loc.cit.

<sup>24</sup>For a short history of Church and German Education, see Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.), Religion, Government and Education, op. cit. pp. 183-191.

Harrington who, in his "Scheme of Government", argued that a state compulsory system was desirable because there was no guarantee that all parents would always be interested in the education of their children. It was also necessary if democracy were to survive.<sup>25</sup> The demand was very popular among the republicans and they issued many publications<sup>26</sup> to press it home to government.

The republicans were opposed not only to the monarchy but also to the established Church of England which controlled education at this time. Their demand for state school system, in addition to its other motives, was also aimed at weakening the influence of the Church in the affairs of the state. But before anything could be accomplished in the direction of their dream, the monarchy was restored in 1660 and with it, the supporters of the Church came back to power. These two developments brought the demand to an end, and education remained firmly under the control of the Church till the nineteenth century.<sup>27</sup>

It was the French Revolution as it affected England that prepared the ground for a policy of tolerating other religious sects in education and thus, breaking the monopoly of the established Church. When Queen Elizabeth I ascended the throne in 1558, the English Roman Catholics who refused to accept the breach with Rome were banished. They migrated to France and Belgium where they opened schools and universities. But in 1793 following the French Revolution four years earlier, they were expelled from these places. Their institutions were closed down and their property confiscated. They fled

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<sup>25</sup> Lester-Smith, W.O. Government of Education, op. cit. p. 69.

<sup>26</sup> Other publications during the Commonwealth period demanding state take-over of education included: Hezekiah Woodward's "The Child's Portion" (1640) and "A Light to Grammar and A Gate to Science" (1641); John Milton's tractate "Of Education" (1644); and William Petty's "Advice of W.P. to Mr. Samuel Hartlib for the Advancement of Some Parts of Learning" (1647-8). Others were: "London's Charity Enlarged" (1650) by Samuel Hartlib and John Durry's "Reformed School" 1650. See Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education, op.cit. pp. 269-279.

<sup>27</sup> Lester-Smith, W.O. Government of Education, op. cit. p. 71.

back to England where, instead of hostility, they were received with sympathy and hospitality.

From that date, although the repressive laws passed after 1660 to exclude Catholics and other non-conformists from education were not actually repealed, they (the laws) were not strictly enforced. This was the beginning of a movement towards tolerating other creeds in English education. It continued and eventually culminated in the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 which legally broke the monopoly of the Church of England. It was thence to compete with other Christian denominations in the establishment of schools.<sup>28</sup>

Before the passage of the 'Emancipation Act', the campaign for state take-over and secularization of education had resumed. In 1807 for example, Samuel Whitbread introduced a bill in Parliament aimed at securing "a national system of rate-aided elementary education". The bill was defeated in the House of Lords where the Archbishop of Canterbury "objected to any system that put the control of education elsewhere than in the hands of the bishop of the diocese".<sup>29</sup>

The "Royal Lancastrian Society" (later the British and Foreign school society) was formed in 1808. The aim of its founders was to provide non-sectarian education. In a counter move, the Anglican Church formed the "National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church". In 1825, the "Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge" was formed. Its aims were to popularize science and general knowledge and to make education available to all. This was followed in 1828 by the repeal of the "Religious Test Act" in respect of Oxford and Cambridge Universities.<sup>30</sup> Five years later in 1833, the Government took

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<sup>28</sup>Hans, N; Comparative Education A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions op. cit. pp. 115-121; see also ibid, pp. 75-6.

<sup>29</sup>Lester-Smith, W.O. Government of Education, op. cit., pp. 77-8.

<sup>30</sup>Bernard, H.C., A History of English Education from 1760, University of London Press, 1971, p. 71.

its first positive step towards active participation in education. It adopted a policy of giving grants to specified schools operated by voluntary organisations. By 1847, three new educational societies had been added to the existing ones. They were: the "Wesleyan Educational Committee", the "Congregational Board of Education" and the "Catholic Poor School Committee". These developments clearly indicated that (i) Church and State were no longer conceived as one indivisible entity; (ii) the need for mass education was increasingly being realized; and (iii) the nation as a whole genuinely desired to accommodate all the denominations within her boundaries - the spirit of religious toleration.

It must however be pointed out that as early as the fourteenth and the fifteenth centuries, there were already schools by charitable organisations and foundations although all such schools were "connected more or less closely with the Church".<sup>31</sup> Many new ones were founded as a result of the impulse generated by the Reformation. For example, Henry VIII himself established ten new grammar schools. Twenty seven others were opened by Edward VI, while Queens Mary and Elizabeth I between them, founded thirty such schools. During these reigns too, other similar schools came into existence through the activities of charitable organisations, and of the seven hundred "high or grammar schools" opened during this period, two hundred and fifty "were founded under the immediate impulse of the Reformation and of the intellectual movement which went hand in hand with it."<sup>32</sup>

On the public opinion front, the advocacy for State take-over of education did not end with the Puritan Reformers. In a series of pamphlets between 1813 and 1816 captioned "A New View of Society or Essay on the Formation of Human Character", Robert Owen (1771-1858) argued that 'the best governed state will be that which has the best national system of

<sup>31</sup> Craik, H.; The State in Its Relation to Education. Macmillan and Co. Ltd; London, 1914, pp. 2-3.

<sup>32</sup> ibid, p. 4; see also Public Schools Commission First Report, Vol. 2, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1968, pp. 14-19; and Board of Education, The Public Schools and the General Educational System, His Majesty's Stationery Office, London, 1944, pp. 6-9.



education". On this ground, he strongly urged the establishment of an undenominational uniform system of education to be controlled by the State throughout the United Kingdom.<sup>33</sup>

Apart from the Church itself, there were leading citizens who took the opposite view. One of such people was John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), whose views appear to have greatly influenced the public opinion of his age on the topic. In his essay "On Liberty" (1859), he condemned state participation in education. Instead, its role should be to force parents to carry out the duty of educating their children in any school of their choice. He argued that:

"A general state education is a mere contrivance for molding people to be exactly like one another; and as the mold in which it casts them is that which pleases the predominant power in government,... it establishes a despotism over the mind leading by natural tendency to one over the body".

According to Mill, there were only two situations in which a state school system might be justified: (i) as "a necessary evil" in a backward society where the private sector cannot provide the facilities for education. But as soon as such society is rich enough to take over the responsibility on "voluntary principle", the state should cease to be involved; and (ii) The state may also provide a system of education in competition with private institution "for the purpose of example and stimulus to keep the others up to a certain standard of excellence".<sup>34</sup>

Another contemporary of Mill who was also opposed to State school system was Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). In his "National Education in Social Statics" (1851) and four "Essays on Education" (1861), he argued that education was largely a matter for the individual and for this reason, any interference by the State was bound to result in some harm.<sup>35</sup> Thus,

<sup>33</sup>Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education, op. cit. pp. 369-371.

<sup>34</sup>Mill, J.S. "On Liberty" in Cowling, M., (ed.) Selected Writings of John Stuart Mill, The New American Library, New York, 1968, pp. 219-220.

<sup>35</sup>Boyd, W. and E.J. King; The History of Western Education, op. cit. pp.371-2.

the disagreement on the issue has not only been between Church and State but also, among social reformers and scholars.

Such was the State of Affairs at the commencement of active state participation in education in England. In 1870, Parliament passed the "Elementary Education Act" and this marked the end of its domination by the various Christian Denominations. By the Act, School Boards were set up and empowered to levy local rates and to open state schools in areas not adequately covered by the religious bodies in order to 'fill the gaps'. In addition, voluntary schools were to receive grants up to 50 per cent of their running cost from Education Department. Conditions had changed and so, the Church of England could not stop the bill especially, as most of the existing schools were under its control.<sup>36</sup>

Once the initial break through was achieved, there was to be no limit in government's increasing share of authority in educational matters. In 1902, Parliament passed another major "Education Act". Its aim was to introduce a unified system of educational control under Local Education Authorities. Under the law, they were empowered:

"to consider the educational needs of their area and  
to take such steps as seem to them desirable, to supply or  
aid the supply of education other than elementary, and to  
promote the general co-ordination of all forms of education . . ."

The then Board of Education was also conferred with the powers of control and inspection of what actually went on in schools.<sup>37</sup>

The demand for complete state take-over continued even after the passage of those two laws. In 1906, a Liberal Party Government introduced a bill in Parliament designed to abolish the existence of Church schools and to empower the local authorities to take them over. Like the one of 1807,

<sup>36</sup> Maclure, J.S., Educational Documents England and Wales 1816 to the Present, Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1973, pp. 98-105.

<sup>37</sup> ibid., p. 149.

the bill was destroyed in the House of Lords. The Board of Education made two similar attempts in 1908 but, the dual system survived in each case.<sup>38</sup>

But inspite of the failure to exclude the Churches altogether, the successive measures achieved two distinct results: (i) the State had clearly become the dominant partner; and (ii) loss of grounds by the Church of England and gains by the Catholics as the following figures show: in 1876, the proportion of enrolment in state schools was 16.7 per cent of all children in school in both England and Wales. By 1938, it had risen to 69.6 per cent. For the corresponding years, it was 60.9 and 22.1 per cent respectively for the Church of England, and 5.7 and 7.4 per cent for the Roman Catholic Mission.<sup>39</sup>

The last major threat to the dual system was from the National Union of Teachers (NUT) in 1942. This was when R.A. Butler, the then President, Board of Education, was engaged in consultations with interest groups in education preparatory to the Education Act of 1944. The Union strongly demanded the exclusion of the Churches from running schools. It wanted "a nationally unified system of education by means of the transfer of all non-provided schools . . . to the control of local education authority".<sup>40</sup>

Inspite of this demand, when the Act reached the Statute Book on the 10th August, 1944, the dual system had again survived, although slightly modified. It has since remained the basis of the relationship between Church and State in educational matters in England and Wales. It will be discussed as a typical form of partnership in education later in this chapter (see *infra*. pp. 73-79 ).

In summary, the above general survey and the particular case of England

<sup>38</sup> Lester-Smith, W.O., Government of Education, op. cit. p. 98.

<sup>39</sup> Murphy, J., 'Church and State in Education: England and Wales' World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. p. 22.

<sup>40</sup> Butler, R.A. 'The Politics of the 1944 Education Act' in Fowler, G. et al. (eds.), Decision Making in British Education Heinemann Educational Book, Ltd., 1973, pp. 8-9.

For an account of Church, State and Education in Britain generally since 1800, see the whole of Murphy, J. Church, State and Schools in Britain 1800-1970. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1971.

clearly show that the problem of Church and State in education is a long standing controversial topic. Its origin dates back to the split in the unity of the Christian religion following the Reformation Movement in the sixteenth century. Since that date, the management and the control of education have gone through four distinct stages:

(i) Period of education as the exclusive right of one universalist Christian Church as was represented by Catholicism before Reformation;

(ii) Period of its monopoly by established national Churches or favoured denominations;

(iii) Toleration of different religious sects in the establishment and management of schools; and

(iv) The present stage in which the State has either taken it over completely or plays a dominant role.

The four stages coincided with definite periods in the development of modern society. Before the Reformation crises, the state was subservient to the Church which provided education for its own needs and for those who cared for it. But following the break in the unity of the Church and the consequent rise of nation states, the monarchy demanded the loyalty of its citizens and not necessarily their being educated. As long as they were loyal to the State, education, for those who wanted it, was left under the control of either the national Church or a favoured denomination now subservient to the authority of the monarch.

The third period was reached when, following many armed religious conflicts and political revolutions, the public became tired and no longer bothered about the religious views of individuals. There had been enough sectarian wars and controversies and it was time everyone was left alone to practise whatever religion he liked. It was this mood that marked the beginning of the policy of allowing different denominations to establish and run schools.

Finally, as a result of the Enlightenment movement and the Industrial

Revolution, it was realized that in addition to loyalty, national security and prosperity also demanded mass literacy. There was need, therefore, for mass education in secular matters and not in religion. Schooling was as much of the responsibility of the State as national security and the promotion of trade. It was, therefore, essential that the State took more active part in its provision, control and management. This realization marked the beginning of national school systems.

During the long struggle too, the various Christian Denominations have reacted one way or the other in different situations to active state involvement in education. Individual countries too have also worked out different arrangements considered suitable for their needs and circumstances. The next section of this chapter examines what the reactions of the four Christian Denominations in Eastern Nigeria have been on the issue in some other places; and the different types of arrangements by which education has been provided and managed in different parts of the world.

### 1.2.1 THE TRADITIONAL ATTITUDES OF THE FOUR DENOMINATIONS INVOLVED IN EASTERN NIGERIA TO CHURCH AND STATE IN EDUCATION

In the course of the long struggle between the Church and State in education, the different Christian Denominations have come to be identified with particular attitudes on the issue. Although references will be made to their reactions when we discuss the different policies and arrangements for the provision and management of education in various countries, we shall here examine the traditional attitudes of the four Missions involved in Eastern Nigeria as are illustrated by their reactions in other countries where they have been involved in similar disputes with the State.

The need for this section is to enable us to compare Church-State relationship in our context with other known cases elsewhere in the world. By doing this, we shall be able to show whether or not the conflict in Eastern Nigeria has any special features in this respect. There is also the fact that although the four denominations are autonomous and independent in principle, but in practice, they still maintain very strong links with their parent bodies in Europe - Great Britain in the case of the Protestants and Rome and the Irish Republic in the case of the Catholics. It is possible that the reactions of the Churches on the issue in these and other places may have some features in common with those of the Missions in the study area. In general and whatever may be the case, this section will help us to analyse our topic of investigation from the point of view of its historical and international setting. For the Protestant Missions, our illustrations are drawn mainly from the United Kingdom. This is on account of the special relationship between education in both countries discussed earlier.

The main claim of Christian Churches to engage in education is based on the injunction by Jesus Christ to His followers:

"Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."<sup>41</sup>

In time, the split in Christian unity and the consequent rivalry among the different groups added new dimensions to this original basis of right, and we shall briefly examine what these have been in relation to the four denominations involved in Eastern Nigeria.

#### A. The Roman Catholic Church

The modern Roman Catholic attitude to education dates back to 1540. It was in that year that one of its members from Spain, Ignatius Loyola (1491-1556), founded the "Society of Jesus" (the Jesuits). The aim of the organisation was "to save France, Southern Germany and Poland from going over to the camp of Protestantism". The control of schools was chosen as its major instrument in the counter-Reformation movement. As time went on, the original aim of the Society was expanded to include the conquest of "new countries for Catholicism through missionary activities, and to pressure or win back old countries through the control of education". This objective was actively supported by the Pope and the Monarchs of all those European countries still loyal to Rome.<sup>42</sup>

Thus, in addition to the divine injunction, the Catholic Church sees education as a potent instrument in its counter Reformation crusade and for winning more souls in every land. It is important to point out that these self-interested reasons why the Catholic Church wants to control education are hardly mentioned in all the arguments with State Governments. It always makes its claim on the basis of the authority conferred on the Church by Jesus Christ.

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<sup>41</sup>St. Mathew, 28, 19.

<sup>42</sup>Hans, N., Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, op. cit. pp. 106-7.

In Canada, Australia and New Zealand for example, the Church has consistently opposed any scheme for comprehensive state management and control of education on the ground that it is contrary to the authority conferred on it "by Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ". On that ground, it maintains that "No system of education can be accepted which does not recognise the guardianship of the bishops over the education of Catholic children". In places like Australia and New Zealand where the Governments have secularized education, the Church reacted by withdrawing the children of its members from public schools and established its own independent system.<sup>43</sup> During the passage of the English Education Act of 1944 as will be shown presently, the Church completely refused to surrender any of its schools to the State and would not consider any compromise on the issue of 'controlled' status for voluntary agency schools.<sup>44</sup> In the United States of America, the attitude of the Church is that "It is the judgement of the fathers that all pastors of souls are bound under the pain of mortal sin to provide a Catholic school in every Parish". For this reason, the Catholics in that country do not send their children to public schools. Instead, the Church has on its own, established there, what is regarded as the largest voluntary school system in the world for the children of its members.<sup>45</sup>

From the Vatican City itself since 1864, it has been consistently asserted that the only suitable school for Catholic children is one whose entire teaching and organisation - teachers, syllabus and text-books in all subjects

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<sup>43</sup> ibid, pp. 121-3.

<sup>44</sup> Butler, R.A., "The Politics of the 1944 Education Act" in Fowler, G., et al., Decision Making in British Education, op. cit. pp. 13-16.

<sup>45</sup> See Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.), Religion, Government and Education op. cit. pp. 153-4; Voeltzel, R., 'Religion and the Question of Rights: Philosophic and Legal Problems in the European Tradition', in World Year Book of Education, 1966, op. cit. p.222.



are regulated and supervised by the Church. But inspite of this general policy, the Church has adopted different attitudes in different social and political situations. For example, in places like the United States, Australia and New Zealand where the Church is rich and has many members, it separates its adherents from the rest of the population by establishing an independent school system without support from public funds. In England where it is in minority and not so rich, many of its schools are partly supported by the State in return for Local Authority participation in their management and inspection and regulation by the Central Government. In the Maritime Province of Canada, majority of Catholic children attend undenominational public schools with special time allocated for religious instruction. In Austria, Germany and Hungary, the Church accepts mixed schools for all denominations with separate religious classes for all the creeds represented on the roll. In these countries, the Church has to accept this arrangement because the Governments are firm in prohibiting the existence of an exclusive Catholic school system.

But where members of the Church are in the majority and it enjoys political influence or patronage, its attitude ranges from total ban on non-Catholic schools as in Spain and Peru, to toleration of the minority Protestant schools as in the Republic of Ireland and Italy. But in countries where denominational institutions and religious teaching are banned altogether as in the USSR, the Catholics do not refuse to allow their members to attend the only schools in existence.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the attitude of the Roman Catholic Church varies from place to place depending on a number of factors - legal provisions for education, the financial and numerical strength of its members.

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<sup>46</sup>Hans, N., Comparative Education . . op. cit. pp. 125-6.

### B. The Anglican and the Church Missionary Society

From its establishment in England under King Henry VIII, the Anglican Church fought hard to ensure a dominant role in education. In this direction and as we saw earlier in this chapter, it used its influence in the House of Lords to defeat four bills aimed at State take-over of schools between 1807 and 1908. The Government's original intention under the Education Act of 1870 was to establish a state system of education. But the Anglican Church frustrated that intention by compelling "the recognition of the denominational principle". In the end, it was the Catholic Church that benefitted more from this action. The Anglican schools were gradually absorbed into the Local Authority system while those of the Catholics remained denominational.<sup>47</sup>

But, by 1942 and during a series of consultations between the Government and all interested groups in education prior to the Education Act of 1944, the Anglican Church had modified its original attitude. Then, changes in the political, social and economic conditions had compelled it to the policy of accepting other religious groups in education. It had also recognised the need for greater Government involvement, particularly, on account of greater demand and increasing cost of education. The contemporary attitude of the Church is that of compromise and co-operation with the State and other agencies in educational matters.<sup>48</sup>

### C. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission

Early in its history, the Presbyterian Church, in places where its members were in the majority, adopted the attitude of identifying Church and State as one body, and so, endeavoured to establish a theocratic form of government. As we shall see later in this chapter, at one time, it

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<sup>47</sup> ibid, pp. 129-137.

<sup>48</sup> Butler, R.A., in Decision Making in British Education, op. cit. pp. 9-13.

claimed and enjoyed absolute authority in Scottish education. The Church also enjoyed similar position of authority in Geneva, and some of the American Colonies where it was the dominant religion.<sup>49</sup>

The contemporary attitude of the Church is reflected in the present arrangement for the provision and management of education in Scotland discussed later in this chapter. As a matter of general policy, the Mission is not opposed to state take-over of schools provided it is allowed to control the religious instruction in the schools it founded and some representation on their governing bodies.<sup>50</sup>

#### D. The Methodist Mission:

Along with the other Free Churches, the Methodists in England originally adopted the attitude that only schools which provide "non sectarian religious instruction" were to be supported from public funds. This was the basis on which they accepted 'controlled' status discussed later in this chapter, for majority of their schools, and the principle of agreed religious syllabus under the Education Act of 1944. But in 1959, this stand was slightly modified. The Mission, while accepting the integration of denominational schools into the national system in the form they are now constituted in England and Wales, insists that the religious bodies should:

"continue to accept a proper measure of financial responsibility for 'Aided Schools' because of the denominational advantages they enjoy."

The Mission would not accept 100 per cent public support for its schools for the fear of losing all power of control and influence over them.<sup>51</sup>

<sup>49</sup> see Hans, N., Comparative Education . . . op. cit. pp. 164-172.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Brickman, W.W., and S. Lehrer (eds.); Religion, Government and Education, op. cit. pp. 162-4 and Murphy, J., "Church and State in Education: England and Wales" in World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 22-3.

<sup>51</sup> ibid, pp. 37-8. See also Murphy, J.; Church State and Schools in Britain 1800-1970, op. cit. pp. 121-2.

At present, therefore, the Methodists in England support the state system of education provided the denominations are assigned some role in it.

With the past and present attitudes of the four Missions on 'Church, State and Education' in mind, we shall next examine the established policies and practices in different countries of the world where some or all of them are also involved in education.

### 1.2.2 INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATION OF POLICIES FOR THE PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF EDUCATION

From the period of absolute Church monopoly of education to the present stage of dominant role by the State, there have been six discernible types of arrangement for its provision, management and control. In different countries at present, four of them are operated in various forms. The other two are of historical interest only as the author could not find any evidence of their being in use anywhere in the modern world. The discussion here begins with the two obsolete policies.

#### I. The Policy of Non-Interference by the State:

This policy as it once applied to England and some other European countries, "gave full freedom to voluntary efforts". The State itself did not spend any money on education. The underlying assumption was that "every individual had the full right to decide the kind and scope of education which he wished to receive".<sup>52</sup> Neither a clerical nor a secular authority could compel a child to attend a school of any kind. But before the child was old enough to decide for himself, the responsibility lay on his parents.

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<sup>52</sup>Hans, N. The Principles of Educational Policy, P.S. King and Son Ltd., London, 1929, p. 2.

The policy operated at the period when the authority of the State was more or less subservient to that of Universal Roman Catholic Church. Then, education was regarded as entirely the affairs of the Church and for its own needs. Under this arrangement, there was a great deal of abuse. Many children were not only left uneducated but, also sent out to work at very tender ages by their illiterate parents. But with the realization of the need for mass education, the policy was completely dropped.

## II. The Policy of Education as the Legal Responsibility of the Church

Under this policy, the State recognised the Church as the supreme authority in education - relegating to it the powers of compulsion and legislation. An example in history was the Scottish system as elaborated by John Knox in the sixteenth century. In Scotland at this time, the supreme authority for education was vested in the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. In addition to administering the school system throughout the country, the Church also assessed and levied local education rates and enforced compulsory attendance. It prescribed the curriculum and conducted education in accordance with its aims. Other places where this policy is known to have operated were Geneva and some of the colonies that later came together to form the United States of America.<sup>53</sup>

The underlying assumptions of this policy were:

- (a) Church and State were inseparable;
- (b) The Church was supreme in all matters both ecclesiastical and secular; and
- (c) From a religious point of view, a country in which it operated was homogeneous and its clergy represented the nation as a whole.

But with the advent of the era of permitting many different religious

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<sup>53</sup>Hans, N., Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, op. cit. pp. 164-172; see also Hans, N., The Principles of Educational Policy, op. cit. pp. 14-15.

groups to open and run schools, the multiplication of Christian denomination, the separation of Church from State and the latter becoming more powerful than the former, these assumptions ceased to be valid. This led to the policy being completely abandoned.

### III. State Monopoly and Ban on Private Institutions:

The policy of state monopoly of education has its origin in Plato's communistic theory of government as enunciated in his 'Republic'. Later, the theory was revived as an outgrowth of Hegelian philosophy which places the ultimate responsibility for the education of all citizens on the state. To Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831). "laws and interests of the family and the civic community are subject and dependent" on the state. One of its main duties is to cater for the interests of all children by providing schools and compelling everyone to attend. In performing this function, the state secures its own future through the use of schools to train "the men required to carry on the civic and political work of the nation."<sup>54</sup>

Under the policy as it operates in different parts of the world (communist and non-communist), the underlying assumption is that:

"The State represents the common interest of the nation and its central government knows best of all the needs and requirements of the whole".<sup>55</sup>

It is, therefore, the responsibility of the State to provide and regulate education according to its needs. The only available education is the one provided by it since the existence of private schools are prohibited by law. "All children", therefore, "are educated for the State, by the State and in State institutions". Every detail of educational provision, (its management, control, finance, curriculum, etc) is the responsibility of

<sup>54</sup>Boyd and King; The History of Western Education, op. cit. pp. 349-51.

<sup>55</sup>Hans, N., The Principles of Educational Policy, op. cit. p.3.

the State. The example of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics (U.S.S.R.) provides a typical illustration of this policy in practice.

The present arrangement in the U.S.S.R. is best understood against the background history of its development. For many centuries before the Revolution of 1917, the Government of Russia and its people were very much attached to the Greek Orthodox religion and culture. From 1861 till the communist take-over of the Government, the creed was recognised as the established national Church with the Tsar as its political head.

The Tsarist administration was very unpopular for its conservatism and unprogressive policies. The Church itself was openly identified with the Tsar and was further seen as standing against popular demand for change. In addition, leaders of the Revolution were themselves vehemently opposed to any form of religion. In 1909, for example, Lenin himself described it as "the opium of the people". The overthrow of the Tsarist regime, therefore, meant the defeat of the Church and its loss of influence and participation in all state matters including education.

Soon after the Revolution, both private schools and religious instruction were abolished and by the Education Act of 1923, "all primary and secondary schools are maintained by the state and the existence of private schools is prohibited."<sup>56</sup> As the policy now operates, every detail of the school system is prescribed and directed by state authorities. Neither the Church nor other private organisations have anything to do with general education. This is an example of state use of its control of education to suppress individual freedom. Other countries in which similar

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<sup>56</sup>See Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.), Religion, Government and Education, op. cit. pp. 203-211; Hans, N., 'Secularism in Eastern Europe' in World Year Book of Education 1966 op. cit. pp. 161-62; Shimoniak, W. "Education in Soviet Union" School and Society Vol. 100, No. 2338. (The Journal of Educational Affairs) January 1972, pp. 58-62; and Holmes, B. (ed.); Education in the U.S.S.R. (A Report of a Study Tour of the Soviet Union, 31st March - 14th April, 1975) University of London Institute of Education, pp. 14-15 ff.

educational policy is practised are: Albania, Bulgaria, East Germany, Guinea, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia<sup>57</sup> and recently, the four states of Eastern Nigeria.

The arrangement in Poland is of special interest for the reason that it is neither a state monopoly as in the Soviet Union nor partnership as in England and Wales. It stands mid-way between the two. In Poland with a Catholic population of about 95 per cent, the Constitution of 1961 provides that all primary schools are owned and managed by the State. The law permits the establishment of Catechetical Centres where religious instruction may be given to pupils in public institutions. The salaries of teachers at these Centres are paid from special funds provided by the State. Religious bodies are permitted to own and manage nursery and secondary schools in which fees are charged. The State pays the salaries of teachers in denominational institutions and may also award scholarships to their poor pupils. The money for other expenses is provided by the Churches. There are no denominational primary schools, and all educational establishments are regulated and supervised by the State Ministry of Education leaving their management in the hands of their founders - either the Government or voluntary bodies.<sup>58</sup>

#### IV. The Policy of Partnership Between Church and State

Under this policy, education is a joint responsibility of both Church and State. Partnership may be in terms of both management and finance as differently illustrated by England and Wales, and France. It may be in

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<sup>57</sup>Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer; Religion Government and Education, op. cit. pp. 211-223; see also Hans, N., 'Secularism in Eastern Europe' World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 165-174; and Scanlon, D.G. (ed.) "Introduction" Church, State and Education in Africa. Teachers College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1966, p. 18.

<sup>58</sup>Wiloch, T.J., "Church and State in Polish Education", World Year Book of Education 1966 op. cit. pp. 338-344; see also Hans, N., "Secularism in Eastern Europe" ibid., pp. 163-165.



respect of management only as exemplified by "the Scottish Solution". In yet another form, partnership may be only in finance as again differently illustrated by practices in the Netherlands and Spain. These are the more distinctive forms of partnership. Other variations of it are usually in combination of two or more features of the above 'types'.

#### A. Partnership in Management and Finance: England and Wales

As the policy of partnership operates in England and Wales, there are both State and Church Schools within the national system. State schools are entirely financed from public funds and managed by Local Education Authorities, while those of the Churches are jointly financed and managed by both bodies. All schools within the national system are generally regulated and supervised by the State. The Education Act of 1944 and its subsequent amendments are the basis of the present arrangement in England and Wales and under it, there are six categories of schools within the national system. They are made up as follows:

##### (i) 'Controlled' Schools:

By the Act, Church schools were given the option of becoming either 'controlled' or 'aided'. If 'controlled', "then the managers or governors are not normally responsible for any expenditure". It is the duty of the Local Education Authority to maintain the school. The authority also appoints two-thirds of the managers or governors while the remaining one-third is appointed by the foundations managers or governors mainly "for the purpose of securing that the character of the school as a voluntary school is preserved and in particular that the school is conducted in accordance with the provisions of the trust deed of the school". The appointment of all teachers is also "under the control of the authority and no teachers may be dismissed except by the authority". The appointment of head teachers by the LEA is done in consultation with the managers or governors of the

schools concerned. Religious instruction "must be in accordance with a syllabus agreed<sup>59</sup> on by a conference representative of the different denominations, the teachers and the authority". Pupils may however be exempted from such religious instruction at the request of their parents and in that case, such children may be instructed either "in accordance with the provisions of the trust deed relating to the school or the practice observed in the school before it became a controlled school" as the case may be.<sup>60</sup>

The 'controlled' status was completely rejected by the Roman Catholics "as being incompatible with fully denominational atmosphere". The Church of England and the Free Churches accepted it as a logical outcome of schools being virtually financed from public funds and hoped that there would not be much difference in the character and tradition of the schools.<sup>61</sup>

(ii) Voluntary Aided Schools: For Church schools that chose the 'aided' status, the local education authority pays their teachers' salaries and running costs. Structural alterations in the buildings, maintenance of their exterior and the school premises, and the appointment and dismissal of teachers are the responsibility of the Churches concerned. The schools give denominational religious instruction and worship. For all capital expenditure, the 1944 Act provided for a grant of up to 50 per cent of the total cost from public funds. In 1959, this was raised to 75 per cent and by 1975, it had gone up to 85 per cent. Two-thirds of their governing bodies are appointed by the founding denominations while the remaining one-third is appointed by the Local Educational Authority. Of the more than 5,000 voluntary aided schools in 1970, about 50 per cent belonged to

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<sup>59</sup>The 'agreed syllabus' is for religious instruction in public and 'controlled' schools. It is drawn by a Conference of all recognised religious denominations, the Church of England, Association of Teachers and the Local Education Authority. In Monmouthshire, Wales, however, the Church of England is not represented. See Taylor, G. and J.B. Saunders; The New Law of Education (7th edition) Butterworth, London, 1971, pp. 54 & 69

<sup>60</sup>ibid, pp. 24-5; see also Butler, R.A., "The Politics of the 1944 Act" in Decision Making in British Education, op. cit. p. 11.

<sup>61</sup>Murphy, J. "Church and State in Education: England and Wales". World Year Book of Education, 1966, op. cit. pp. 29-30.

the Roman Catholic Church.<sup>62</sup>

(iii) Maintained Schools: These are entirely provided from public funds and managed by Local Education Authorities. In them, "no religious catechism or religious formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination should be taught". Both religious worship and instruction (given in accordance with the 'agreed syllabus'), are optional to pupils and teachers alike. To make withdrawal from them easier, all religious activities take place either at the beginning or by the end of a school day.<sup>63</sup>

(iv) 'Special Agreement Schools': This category of schools came into existence by the Education Act of 1936. Under it, local education authorities were empowered to contribute between 50 and 75 per cent of the cost of erecting denominationally sponsored new senior primary schools. Of the 519 applications received, 289 or nearly 56 per cent came from the Roman Catholic Church. The Second World War (1939-45) interrupted their full implementation. They were, however, revived by the Education Act of 1944. In 1970, there were 160 such schools of which 120 or 75 per cent were sponsored by the Catholics.

In all 'Special Agreement Schools', the appointment of the teaching staff including the 'reserved teachers' for religious instruction, is the responsibility of the Local Education Authorities concerned. The 'reserved teachers', however, are appointed in consultation with the sponsoring denomination and their proportion to the total number of teachers on the staff of a school is decided in the agreement.

To preserve their character as voluntary schools, two-thirds of their governing bodies are nominated by the founding Churches. At present, they are made grants to the tune of 80 per cent of the cost of external repairs and of establishing the schools. A 'Special Agreement School' may repay

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<sup>62</sup>Dent, H.C., The Educational System of England and Wales, University of London Press, Ltd., 1971 pp. 31-2 and 46; Taylor, and Saunders, New Law of Education, op.cit. pp. 25-8. and Lester-Smith, W.O., Government of Education, op. cit. p. 87.

<sup>63</sup>Taylor and Saunders, op. cit. p. 52.

the loan made to its sponsors from public funds for its establishment and thereafter, revert to an 'aided' status. It may also apply to the Secretary of State for Education and Science to become 'controlled' on account of financial difficulties. This last point applies also to an 'aided' school.<sup>64</sup>

(v) 'Direct Grant Schools':

These are the voluntary schools which get their grants direct from the Central Government and not from a Local Education Authority. Their origin dates back to 1926 when the grant aided schools outside the LEA's were given the option of either getting their grants direct from the Central Authority or from the LEA's. All but 250 of such schools opted for direct grants from the Central Government. Under the Fleming Committee Report of 1942, all the 'Direct Grant Schools' were "required either to abolish tuition fees or, if tuition fees are retained, to grade them according to an approved income scale which should provide for total remission if a parent's income requires it". Boarding fees were to be similarly graded. Local Education Authorities paying tuition, "part or all of the boarding" fees "should have the right to reserve places at such schools". One-third of the governing body is appointed by the LEA's which send pupils to the schools. In other words, all the LEA's which have agreements with 'Direct Grant Schools' are to be represented on their governing bodies. In 1970, there were 320 such schools in England and Wales.<sup>65</sup>

(vi) Independent Schools

The distinctive feature of schools in this category is that they receive no aid from public funds, and for this reason, subject to minimal state control. They include the best and the oldest 'Public Schools' such as Eton, Winchester, Westminster, Charterhouse, Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury,

<sup>64</sup> ibid, pp. 28-9; see also Dent, H.C., op. cit. p. 46.

<sup>65</sup> Bernard, H.C., A History of English Education from 1760 op. cit. pp. 242-4; see also Taylor and Saunders, op. cit., pp. 37-9 and Dent, H.C. op. cit. p. 44.

St. Paul's and Merchant Taylors; and the not-so-old and less efficient private schools. By the Education Act of 1944, all independent schools are to be registered with the then Ministry of Education and now the Department of Education and Science (DES). They are also required to "be open to inspection at all reasonable times". There are laid down standards which they must attain to qualify for recognition as efficient or for registration or both. There is also an 'Independent School Tribunal' set up by the State to receive and investigate all complaints against this group of schools. In 1970, there were 2,800 Independent Schools in England and Wales. Of that number, 1,430 were 'Recognised as Efficient by the DES and the remaining 1,350 were merely registered as independent. There are many Catholic institutions in this category especially, convent schools for girls.<sup>66</sup>

All six groups are within the national system which is directed and regulated by the DES headed by a Senior Cabinet Minister. Under the law, he has powers for planning and organising education on national basis. But in matters of curricula, text books and general management of schools, there is no rigid control from the centre. Instead, the Parliament, which has the overall responsibility for education and other social services, prescribes general guidelines for all the participating bodies to adapt to local needs and circumstances. By this means, effective participation of all concerned and at all levels within the national system is ensured. Furthermore, the role of the central authority is intended to provide room for variations necessary for reflecting local interests and traditions.<sup>67</sup>

In the distribution of functions and responsibilities, there are 'checks and balances' aimed at making it difficult for any of the major partners to resort to dictatorial use of its powers. As a result, all parties "regard

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<sup>66</sup>Taylor and Saunders; op. cit. pp. 39-42; see also Dent, H.C., op. cit. pp. 44 and 156-7 and Bernard H.C., op. cit. pp. 240-8.

<sup>67</sup>Hans, N., Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, op. cit. p. 256.

and treat each other as partners". Every one of them is constantly "alert to ensure that the centre does not become too much the dominant partner".<sup>68</sup>

The result of all the above is that in practice the framework for operating the national system of education is neither centralized as in France nor decentralized as in the USA. Each of the partners in English education has a reasonable measure of influence over policy decisions and their implementation. The English arrangement is a very good example of Government effective control of education without necessarily taking over the ownership and management of schools completely. All things being equal, it contradicts the argument in Eastern Nigeria that one of the ways of ensuring effective Government control is to nationalize the school system. The partnership arrangement in England and Wales is the best developed form of relationship between Church and State in education, and it is worthy of export to wherever the conditions are right.

The above survey reveals two distinct features of the English form of partnership: (a) the responsibility for management and finance is shared between public authorities and the Churches. The function of control is performed, in relation to all schools, by the state through Acts of Parliament; regulations by the DES and the Local Education Authorities; and different systems of financial assistance from public funds by both authorities; and (b) the national school system is made up of three main groups: first, those entirely financed from public funds and managed by the Local Education Authorities; second, denominational schools ('controlled', 'aided', 'special agreement' and 'direct grant', although not all in the last category are owned by religious bodies), partly financed from public funds and jointly managed by the Churches and public authorities; and third, the 'Independent Schools' which receive no financial assistance from public funds but, open to inspection by state officials and subject to

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<sup>68</sup>Dent, H.C., op. cit. pp. 65-6.

national education laws and regulations.

In relation to the Churches, the survey reveals that majority of Catholic schools are in the categories of 'aided', 'special agreement', and 'independent'. Compared with the other groups, all three are less subject to public control in return for more financial contribution by their founders. This point is significant because it indicates a tendency by the Catholic Church of insisting on greater control over its schools than the Protestant denominations, and its preparedness to take on more financial responsibility for their maintenance in order to achieve this objective. It would also suggest that the Catholics are either richer than the Protestants or more dogmatic in their relationship with the State on educational matters, or both. This last indication is, however, outside the scope of this study.

#### B. The French Form of Partnership:

In France, there are two separate school systems existing side by side. One is entirely financed and managed by the State and the other partly financed by the State and wholly managed by the Churches. Both the public and the denominational school units are virtually independent of each other. One common feature is that both are highly centralized in management and control with clear similarities in structure and teaching methods. Compared with partnership in England and Wales, the French arrangement differs from the English in that inspite of some form of public assistance, the denominational schools in France are under the sole management of the Churches.<sup>69</sup>

The Church schools have three main areas of relationship with the State: (a) They are open for inspection by state officials in return for grants from public funds; (b) They have the option of entering into

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<sup>69</sup>For the present form of relationship between Church and State in French education, see Mallinson, V. "Church and State in French Education", World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 67-77.

'contract of association' with the State as prescribed by the education law of 1959. By it, the salaries of teachers in such institutions are paid from public funds on the same scale as those in the public system. All Such schools retain their sectarian character but, must admit "all children regardless of origin, opinions and beliefs", and must give due regards to freedom of conscience in their instruction; and (c) Local Authorities are to assist any of their deserving children regardless of the schools they attend. In addition, religious instruction is optional in public institutions and may be given only on Thursdays outside normal school hours.<sup>70</sup>

It took more than a century of bitter struggle to arrive at the present arrangement. The laws of 1882 and 1904 secularized the public system leaving the Catholic schools both voluntary and independent. Since then, there have been attempts aimed at abolishing Church schools altogether, and during the German occupation in the 1940's, efforts were made at placing the whole system of education once more under the control of the Catholic church. So far, no complete success has been achieved in either direction and the conflict has continued.

The Socialist and the Communist Parties want denominational schools abolished and taken over by the State. The Catholic Church which owns most of them, wants them integrated into the public system with general acceptance of religious instruction in the Catholic tradition, and continued participation of the Church in their management and control especially, in the appointment of teachers. Because France is a country sharply divided between majority Catholic population and strong revolutionary advocates of secularism in education, it is doubtful that an arrangement satisfactory to all will ever be achieved.<sup>71</sup> It is important to note that even in a

<sup>70</sup>Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer; (eds.) *Church, State and School* op. cit. p. 170; and Hans, N., *Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions*, op. cit. p. 292.

<sup>71</sup>Hans, N., *ibid*, pp. 290-1.



country as old and developed as France, the issue of Church and State in education is not yet permanently resolved.

In many respects, the arrangement in Western Germany<sup>72</sup> is similar to the French form of partnership. The only main difference is that while the French system is highly centralized, Western Germany operates a decentralized arrangement to reflect her federal constitution. As in England and France, Germany also has a long history of conflict between Church and State in education.

### C. 'The Scottish Solution'

An example of partnership in management only is represented by what is generally referred to as 'The Scottish Solution' to the problem of Church and State in education. By the 'Education (Scotland) Act of 1918', denominational schools which accepted the offer, were conferred with 'transferred' status and became integrated into the national system. All transferred institutions are financed from public funds. The foundation Churches are represented on their governing bodies, appointed by the Local Education Authorities. The appointment of teachers for the schools, particularly for religious instruction, by the LEA's, is subject to approval by the founding denominations. The Law allows the institutions to retain their sectarian character prior to transfer to the public system, and the Churches appoint unpaid Supervisors to ensure that this remains unaltered. There are a few schools (mainly Catholic) that rejected the 'transferred' status and they are allowed to function independent of the national system both in finance and management. In other words, the State has nothing to do with the actual running and financing of such schools.

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<sup>72</sup>For the history of Church and State in German education and the present arrangement, see Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer; Religion, Government, and Education, op. cit. pp. 183-191; and Helmreich, E.C., Religious Education in German Schools, An Historical Approach, Harvard University Press, Cambridge 1959.

On the other hand, however, all primary and secondary institutions within the country are regulated and supervised by the State,<sup>73</sup> and under the Education (Scotland) Act of 1945, all independent schools are to be registered with the Secretary of State for Scotland Affairs and "shall be open to public inspection at all reasonable times".<sup>74</sup>

There are three main points of difference between 'the Scottish Solution', and the arrangement in England and Wales. First in Scotland, all Church related schools within the national system are entirely financed from public funds but, in England and Wales, the 'aided', 'special agreement' and 'direct grant' are not. Second, with the exception of the 'controlled' ones, the foundation Churches have majority representation on the schools' governing bodies. But in Scotland, all 'transferred' schools are managed by Local Education Authorities with denominational representation on the committees. Thirdly, while religious teaching in England and Wales in 'controlled' schools may be according to the 'agreed syllabus', in Scotland, it is definitely according to the creed of the founding religious body.

#### D. Partnership in Finance Only

Under this form of partnership as it operates in many countries, both the public and denominational school systems exist side by side. While all schools are financed from public funds, the Churches are responsible for the appointment and dismissal of teachers for their own institutions and also for their management. In Spain and Peru for example, there are only State and Catholic schools and the other denominations which are in minority in both places, are compelled to send their children to either of the two as

<sup>73</sup> Craigie, J., "Denominational Schools in Scotland", World Year Book of Education 1966 op. cit. pp. 323-5; see also Brickman, W.W. and S. Lehrer (eds.), Religion, Government and Education op. cit. pp. 162-4.

<sup>74</sup> Education (Scotland) Act 1945, His Majesty's Stationery Office, London, p. 42., see also, Murphy, J., Church, State and Schools in Britain, 1800-1970, op. cit. pp. 102-4.

they are not allowed to open institutions of their own, and the children "must receive instruction in Catholicism and take part in the Mass".<sup>75</sup> This is an example of intolerance by the Church in places where its members are in majority and it also enjoys political influence and patronage.

In the Netherlands on the other hand, the national system is made up of State, Catholic and Protestant schools all receiving equal financial support from public funds. The appointment and dismissal of teachers in denominational schools are "not subject to State intervention". Instead, there is a 'Committee of Appeal' for every twelve such institutions. Its membership is made up of 3 representatives each from the governing bodies and the teaching staff and a seventh member, the Chairman, jointly elected by both sides. Any aggrieved teacher may send his complaints to the Committee whose decision is final and binding on all concerned. Each agency in the system is responsible for the management of its own schools under regulations made by the State.<sup>76</sup> With modifications reflecting varying local conditions, the Dutch arrangement also operates in such other places as Israel, Italy, Belgium, Portugal, Egypt and the Canadian Provinces of Ontario and Quebec.

Compared with the other variations of partnership, the differences are: in Netherlands the state pays the full cost of denominational schools without participating in their actual management. But in the case of the 'controlled' schools in England and Wales, whose full expenses are financed from state funds, public authorities appoint two-thirds of their governing bodies; and in the other aid-receiving denominational schools, management is shared between Church and State. In the French system, the

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<sup>75</sup> Clayton, A.S., "Church, State and School" in Harris, C.W. and M.R. Liba (eds.); Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Macmillan Company, New York, 1960, p. 204; see also Hoz, V.G. "Denominational Schools in Spain" World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 348-350.

<sup>76</sup> Idenburg, P.J., "Church and State in Education in the Netherlands", ibid, pp. 78-91.

state does not pay the full cost of denominational schools and does not participate in their management. Under the Scottish arrangement, the State is more than a senior partner in the management of Church schools in return for full financial support from public funds.

#### V. The Policy of Only Denominational Schools Financed by the State:

Another form of arrangement is where the only schools in existence are those owned and managed by the Churches and financed by the state. As this policy operates in the Irish Republic,<sup>77</sup> the State has no primary and secondary grammar schools of its own. The national system is made up of three different units owned and managed by the Catholics, the Protestants and Jews. The State makes common regulations for all three units, certifies the qualifications of teachers and pays their salaries in addition to a grant of at least, two-thirds the cost of school buildings.

The appointment of teachers and the management of the schools are entirely the responsibility of the Churches. There are, however, a few private primary and secondary institutions outside the national system as constituted by the three main units that receive no financial support from the State. The arrangement in the Irish Republic differs from the policy of partnership in finance only by the absence of a public system entirely financed and managed by the State except for the technical schools.

#### VI. The Policy of Independent Public and Denominational Systems:

A typical illustration of this policy is the principle of non-state support for denominational schools as it is by law in the United States of America (USA). By the First Amendment to the Constitution adopted in 1791, Church and State are separated and "Congress shall make no law

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<sup>77</sup>Cannon, P.F.G., "Denominational Education in the Republic of Ireland" World Year Book of Education 1966 op. cit. pp. 328-332; see also Mescal, J. Religion in the Irish System of Education, Clonmore and Reynolds, Dublin, 1957.

respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof".<sup>78</sup>

The implication of this is that neither of the two bodies is to be used to further the objectives of the other. As it applies to education, the State cannot prohibit the existence of denominational schools or support them from public funds. Public schools are open to all children and teachers are employed in them without discrimination on grounds of religious affiliation. Parents are free to send their children to either the free state schools or the fee paying independent denominational ones.<sup>79</sup>

Before the present arrangement was adopted in 1791, the USA went through stages similar to those of England and other European countries on the issue of Church and State in education.<sup>80</sup> Despite that, the problem is still far from being settled to the satisfaction of all concerned. For instance, the Catholic Church whose schools in the USA constitute the largest voluntary system in the world, still objects to the denial of public funds to denominational schools. The Church would want the State to pay the funds meant for education direct to children or their parents and leave them to go to any school of their choice. On the other hand, some of the States have tried without success to abolish Church schools altogether. But in spite of all this, the principle of non-state support for sectarian schools remains the official policy.

The constitutional provision notwithstanding, the highly decentralized nature of education in the country makes it difficult to have one uniform practice in all the States. Each of the associating fifty States

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<sup>78</sup>Quoted in Clayton, A.S., "Church, State and School" in Harris, C.W. and A.R. Liba (eds.); Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Macmillan Company, New York, 1960, p. 199.

<sup>79</sup>Hunt, R.L., "Church Education in the United States of America", World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. p. 40.

<sup>80</sup>For a historical short account of Church and State in American education, see Clayton, A.S., "Church, School and State" op. cit. pp. 201-3.

in the Union is autonomous in educational matters. In 1958 for example, eight states gave aid to denominational schools in one form or the other, and thirty-eight states allowed no form of assistance whatsoever. For example, some provided free transport for children in non-public schools while others did not. At the same time, only three States provided free textbooks to children in denominational schools. At present, the only common feature between the two school systems is the licensing of teachers.<sup>81</sup>

Thus, despite the general principle of non-public support for sectarian schools, the practice is not uniform throughout the Federated states. This is a reflection of the over-decentralised nature of the provision for education, the peoples' commitment to democratic way of life, and the plural nature of their background. However, except the instances of public support for supplementary services, the United States is a typical example of a country where tax money is not used to maintain denominational schools. The two systems (parochial and public) exist independent of each other both in finance and management.

Other places where policies similar to that of the USA operate are: Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, the Canadian Provinces of British Columbia and Manitoba, Chile, Cuba and India. In the case of Uganda, although denominational schools receive no support from public funds, they are subject to State supervision and prescription of fees to be paid by their pupils.<sup>82</sup> The ban on public support for sectarian institutions differentiates the U.S. policy from partnership as it is practised in France for example.

### 1.2.3 Recent Solutions in English-Speaking Africa: Kenya and Ghana

#### A. Kenya:

In English-speaking Africa, the arrangements in Kenya and Ghana

<sup>81</sup> See Hunt, R.L.; "Church Education in the United States of America" World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 41-3; and Brickman, W.W. "The History of Secularization of the Public Schools in the United States of America," ibid, pp. 135-159.

<sup>82</sup> Gumisiriza, E.L., The Control of Primary and Secondary Education in Post-Independence Uganda with Special Reference to Ankole District. (Unpublished M.A. Dissertation University of London Institute of Education, September, 1974, p. 84.)

although similar to some of those already discussed, deserve separate treatment as recent solutions to the problem of Church and state in education. They are also relevant bearing in mind the common heritage of these two countries with Nigeria as former African Colonies of Great Britain especially in the field of formal school education.

At independence in 1963, 83 per cent of primary and 67 per cent of secondary institutions in Kenya were owned and managed by Christian Churches.<sup>83</sup> This picture, as will be shown later in Section Three of this study, is similar to that of the study area at Nigeria's independence in 1960. Faced with the problem of effective planning and co-ordination of education for the needs of the State, the Kenyan Government decided on an arrangement similar to the 'Scottish Solution' discussed earlier.

Under the new policy, denominational schools are integrated into the national system through a process of 'sponsorship' (as it is called) by "a responsible central organisation of a Church". For this purpose, the Kenya Education Act, 1968 provides that:

"Where a transferred school was managed by a Church, or an organisation of Churches, and it is the wish of the community served by the school that the religious traditions of the school should be respected, the former manager shall be appointed by the local authority to serve as the sponsor to the school".<sup>84</sup>

The Law also provides that private individuals and organisations wishing to establish and conduct "an unaided school shall first make application to the Minister for the school to be registered."<sup>85</sup> In other words, unlike in the Eastern States of Nigeria at present, unaided private schools are allowed to function provided they are duly registered with the Ministry of

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<sup>83</sup> These figures are derived from Dain, F.R., "Church and State in Education: Kenya", *World Year Book of Education*, 1966, op. cit. p. 376.

<sup>84</sup> Kenya Education Act, 1968, Kenya Gazette Supplement Acts 1968, Government Printer, Nairobi, p. 212.

<sup>85</sup> *ibid*, p. 215.

Education, which also has the power to enter, inspect and audit the accounts of "any school at any time with or without notice".<sup>86</sup>

The 'sponsored' status confers on the Churches concerned the privileges of representation on the governing bodies of the schools, participation in the posting of teachers, organising and supervising religious instruction and the "use of school buildings when not required for educational purposes". In 'sponsored' secondary and teacher training institutions, majority of the members of their management committees are appointed by the founding Churches.<sup>87</sup>

On its part, the Government plans, directs and co-ordinates education throughout the country. It prescribes standards and issues the code of management. The entire running costs of all schools in the national system is financed from public funds.<sup>88</sup> By this arrangement, the State is able to plan and regulate education and at the same time, play active role in its management while also co-operating with the Churches, benefitting from their expertise in the field and using their manpower resources which it may not have.

#### B. Ghana:

The system of educational provision and management as it operates in Ghana is a unique form of partnership. It is not exactly the same as the English, the Scottish, the Dutch or the French arrangement. In Ghana, all schools are generally 'regarded as state-owned' although not in the legal sense. Teachers' salaries and running costs are financed from public funds. The Ministry of Education (now the Ghana Education Service), prescribes standards and makes regulations in the areas of curricula and examinations, admissions and promotion of pupils, school records and duties of managers.

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<sup>86</sup> ibid, p. 219.

<sup>87</sup> Cowan, L.C., The Cost of Learning: The Politics of Primary Education in Kenya, Teachers' College Press, Columbia University, New York, 1970, p.65 ff.

<sup>88</sup> Kenya Education Act 1968, op.cit. p. 223; see also Dain, F.R., "Church and State in Education: Kenya" World Year Book of Education 1966, op. cit. pp. 375-7.



The Teachers Service Committee, appointed by the State, is responsible for the appointment and promotion of teachers. Thus, the Government determines policies "dealing with all matters relating to education" and sees to their implementation through its team of Inspectors and other Ministry Officials.

On their part, the Missions, 'acting as agents of the Government', perform the actual day-to-day running of the schools. They do this not only for those originally founded by them, but also where invited, for many other Local Education Authority schools. Under this arrangement, in 1973/4 for example, the Missions managed 2,835 or 41.3 per cent of the 6843 primary schools in Ghana.<sup>89</sup> At the Middle School level at the same time, they were managing 861 or 23.2 per cent of the 3,711 such schools throughout the country.<sup>90</sup> Each Church conducts religious instructions in schools under its management according to its own creed. Pupils are granted the option of abstaining from such classes if their parents so desire, and no child is to be discriminated against in matters of admission on religious grounds.<sup>91</sup>

Under the Ghana arrangement, what happens in practice is that the Government provides a unified system of educational planning, control and finance under a diversified management units by different religious groups. It is an example of state take-over of control of education without its actual management, and another form of partnership in management only. The Government draws up its programmes for education according to the national needs and uses the experiences and human resources of the Missions which it may not have, to implement them.

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<sup>89</sup> Ghana Teaching Service, Digest of Educational Statistics: 1973/74, Table 7, pp. 19-20.

<sup>90</sup> ibid, Table 12, pp. 36-8.

<sup>91</sup> McWilliam, H.O.A. and Kwamena-Poh, M.A., The Development of Education in Ghana (new edition) Longman Group Ltd; London, 1975, pp. 83-102; see also Amim, N.O. "Ghana" in Scanlon, D.G. (ed.) Church, State and Education in Africa, op. cit. pp. 165-196.

The Ghana arrangement differs from partnership in England and Wales by its state payment of the full running cost of all Church schools within the national system, and leaving their management entirely to their founders. In France too, denominational schools are not fully supported from public funds, and in Scotland, management is largely by Local Education Authorities in return for state support. Under the Dutch form of partnership, the Churches appoint and dismiss their teachers while in Ghana, this is a function of a public authority. Compared with the policy in the Irish Republic, there is an established public system in Ghana, while in the former, all available primary and secondary grammar schools are denominational and their teachers are appointed and dismissed by the Churches. Thus, the Ghana arrangement cannot strictly be classified under any of the other forms of partnership. At present, Zambia operates the same type of policy although its Government has announced a plan to hand over all primary schools to local authorities sometime in 1977.

### Summary

From the above survey of policies and practices, we see that they vary from absolute state monopoly as in the Soviet Union, to 'free enterprise' in education under state financing, regulation and supervision as in the Netherlands. In-between the two, are various forms of partnership; and the independent existence of public and denominational school systems as in the United States. These typical forms do not always exist by themselves. They may be in mixtures with other minor variations. For instance, in the English and French forms of partnership, there are independent schools in which fees are charged and in which the state has no share in their finance and management. Again, in the American system of non-public support for denominational schools, there are instances of indirect state assistance for supplementary services. The survey also reveals that the policy

of State monopoly and ban on Church and private schools in general, is more in practice among the Russian brand of communist countries. In the Western 'Democracies', the more widely practised policy is the existence of public, and Church schools with or without state support.

Finally, it is difficult to say that one or the other of the main policies is better or makes for greater rate of development in the life of a nation. This is because all the different forms of arrangements (except Church domination), are found among the highly developed and leading nations of the world. What is needed, therefore, is for individual countries to work out an arrangement best suited to its needs and circumstances and the present arrangement in Eastern Nigeria will be analysed and evaluated in the light of this conclusion.

Notwithstanding the above tendency, there is a clear indication as Nicholas Hans has shown, that there is a higher rate of illiteracy and conservatism in those countries where the Church is dominant in education than in the ones where it is a 'junior partner', an independent agency or excluded altogether. The point here has been illustrated by comparing the level of literacy for instance, in such leading Catholic countries as Spain, Portugal, Italy and the Irish Republic, where the Church dominates education, with such others as the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, Western Germany and France where the Church is either 'a junior partner', excluded altogether or merely allowed to operate an independent school system of its own. Such a comparison shows that the first group of countries lag behind the second in such educational areas as the level of mass literacy, the introduction of universal and compulsory primary education and innovative measures in general.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup>See Hans, N., Comparative Education: A Study of Educational Factors and Traditions, op.cit. pp. 104-5; and his The Principles of Education Policy, op. cit. p. 6.

### 1.3 THE PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING, CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT<sup>93</sup>

Some of the main criticisms of the partnership arrangement leading to the nationalization of the school system centred around some alleged obstacles posed by the presence of too many agencies in education to effective planning, control and management. As we propose to examine those criticisms later in Section Four of this study, it is considered necessary here to outline some of the basic principles and practices of those concepts as a part of our overall framework of analysis and evaluation. With such an outline at the background, we shall be able to (i) determine the extent to which those criticisms were either justified or motivated by some other considerations; and (ii) see more clearly the implications of those different types of arrangements discussed earlier in this chapter, to planning, control and management of education.

#### 1.3.1 Educational Planning:

In an essay entitled 'What is Educational Planning?', Professor Gareth Williams simply defined it by saying that "planning in education, as in anything else, consists essentially of deciding in advance what you want to do and how you are going to do it".<sup>94</sup> According to Arnold Anderson and Jean Bowman, educational planning is "the process of preparing a set of decisions for future action pertaining to education".<sup>95</sup> In a book entitled

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<sup>93</sup>A great deal of the materials for this section of the study was derived from Mr. P.R.C. Williams Lecture Mimeographs to M.A. students (Administration and Planning Option), University of London Institute of Education 1974/75 and 1975/76 academic sessions.

<sup>94</sup>Williams, Gareth; "What is Educational Planning?" in Higher Education, Vol. 1; No. 4, 1971, Elsevier, Amsterdam 1971 (Special edition on Educational Planning).

<sup>95</sup>Anderson, C.A. and M.J. Bowman, "Theoretical Considerations in Educational Planning" in The World Year Book of Education, 1967, Evans, London, 1967 (The whole edition was devoted to Educational Planning).

'What is Educational Planning?', Philip Coombs defines it as "Educational Planning, in its broadest generic sense, is the application of rational, systematic analysis to the process of educational development with the aim of making education more effective and efficient in responding to the needs and goals of its students and society".<sup>96</sup>

The essential features of planning in general and educational planning in particular are covered by the above three definitions. First and foremost, planning is concerned with future development. But, before going on to consider the desired line of action for the future, the planner must first analyse and understand the state of affairs in the past and at present. Second, planning is concerned with the consequences of a given set of proposals after their implementation. The aim of such proposals is to 'change the present into a more desirable future'. Third, planning is closely related to policy making because the essence of the former is to translate policies into programmes for future action. Viewed from this angle, planning is concerned with making policies operational.

In education, the relationship between planning and policy is very important. For instance, where the educational objectives of a government differ from those of the other major agencies in education, the conflict of objectives makes it difficult for a common plan to be drawn up and implemented for the school system as a whole. Part of the difficulty arises from the fact that although a government may have powers to stop the other agencies in education from doing what it does not want them to do, on the other hand, there may be no effective means of getting them to do what they do not want to do. An illustration of this can be getting them to start a school where one is needed and where they themselves have no interest.

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<sup>96</sup> Coombs, P.H., *What is Educational Planning?* Unesco: International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1970, p.14.

The implication of the above possible situation is that it can easily lead to constant deadlock between government and the other agencies. The only way to avoid this in a partnership system is to work out in advance sufficient harmony between the different objectives before attempting any central planning. This is possible where there is willingness on all sides to co-operate as is illustrated by the partnership arrangements in such places as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Ghana and Kenya. The failure of the Governments in Eastern Nigeria to co-exist with the Voluntary Agencies in education suggests lack of co-operation and/or the presence of other extraneous considerations and factors and it will be interesting to investigate what they were.

There are other important aspects of planning. They are the elements of sequence, consistency and probability. Sequence is concerned with the order in which actions have to be taken over a given period of time in order to attain a given measure of predetermined objectives, and how best the set of programmes are to be implemented in order to achieve the desired goals at the right time. In educational planning, this can be illustrated with how to programme teacher supply to cope with anticipated increase in enrolment or the establishment of new schools or the expansion of old ones. It will be difficult to plan and implement a programme on any of the above if the government and the other agencies are not agreed on them as a common objective.

Consistency implies the absence of contradictions in any of the areas covered by a given plan. The objectives of any plan for education must, as far as possible, be in harmony with those of the agencies concerned with its administration and the society in general. It is a part of consistency in this context to ensure that the cost of implementing a given plan is not more or in excess of the available resources. It also demands that within the education system itself, there should be a balance between the projected intakes to the various levels with outputs at the preceding

stages. All these can only be achieved through corporate planning subscribed to by all main agencies in a school system.

On 'probability' it must be recognised that every plan is subject to a whole range of natural, human and social factors. This calls for flexibility and adequate allowance for the unexpected. For example, there could be changes in the weather which could disrupt building schedules, ruin crops or dislocate the economy. Prices in a country's exports and imports could change for the worse. There could be civil disorders, military coups or change of government through the ballot box. All these could affect education in one way or the other and with an effective machinery of co-ordination, their effects could be very much reduced.

It is also important to note as studies by Philip Coombs<sup>97</sup> have shown that particularly in developing countries, poor planning or lack of it leads to inter alia:

- (a) wasteful imbalance within the educational system;
- (b) demand far in excess of capacity;
- (c) cost rising faster than revenue; and
- (d) lack of employment for school leavers.

All these together underline the importance of planning in education, and as the supplier of the needed trained manpower for the overall economy and social services, governments give it priority attention in their development plans.

For our purpose, the important question is whether or not, and from the nature of educational planning, its principles and practices and the need for it as outlined above, the partnership arrangement proved an obstacle to effective planning in Eastern Nigeria. We shall examine this question in Chapter Nine where the various criticisms levelled against the partnership

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<sup>97</sup> ibid, pp. 26-32.

arrangement are assembled and analysed.

### 1.3.2 Control of Education

As we saw earlier in this Chapter, the arrangement for the provision and control of education ranges from absolute state monopoly as in the USSR to private ownership with state finance as in the Irish Republic. The arrangement in any particular country reflects the history of its educational system, its political philosophy and the available resources. We shall first examine how each of these in turn influences the system of educational control.

#### (i) Historical Circumstances:

Our outline history of Church and State in education in Western Europe and the contemporary arrangements in different parts of the world show that in most of the countries, schools were originally sponsored and controlled by religious bodies. Later, it was realised that the state needed education as much as the religious bodies, or the latter needed financial assistance from public funds for its educational work. In either case, the state stepped in and made grants to the schools, and in return, laid down conditions under which they were to operate for example: that pupils should not be discriminated against on religious grounds, inspection procedures, rendering of reports, statistics, etc. The third stage was reached when the State decided to ensure equal education opportunity for all its citizens. Realizing that the voluntary agencies either had not the means to carry out this policy, or would not respond quickly to the needs of the society, the state started to open its own national school system. The fourth and present stage came, in some countries, when governments ceased to support voluntary agency schools or actually took them over and prohibited the existence of private schools and appropriated to themselves the entire responsibility for the provision and control of education.



(ii) Political Philosophy:

In some countries, governments open schools only in areas where there are not enough facilities by private initiative as we saw in the case of the English Education Act of 1870. In others, governments take the view that they are duty bound to intervene actively in the provision and control of education in order to promote national interests and ensure social justice.

(iii) Available Resources:

In yet other countries, governments believe that their scarce resources in money, materials and personnel will be conserved if other agencies are allowed to manage and possibly contribute some money in support of education while the governments exercise control of the school system as we saw earlier in the cases of Kenya and Ghana. All these reinforce once more the point made earlier that whatever arrangement a country decides to adopt is often determined by its peculiar circumstances.

On 'control' itself, its application to education refers to the means by which a government directs and determines what goes on in its national school system. It implies the process by which a state gets its educational policies carried out. Governments perform the function of control through such means as preparing and presenting educational budgets to parliaments, drafting and proposing legislations, inspecting schools, holding consultations and giving advice on educational matters, prescribing the curricula and conducting examinations and research.<sup>98</sup>

By the power to determine the resources that are to be made available for education, and the conditions attached to grants to schools, governments are able to control educational facilities within their national systems. With their legislative powers, they can require certain things of schools and

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<sup>98</sup> Kandel, I.L., 'Public Education' in Seligman, E.R.A.; and Alvin Johnson (eds.), Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Vol. 5), The Macmillan Company, New York, 1953, p. 149.

are able to impose sanctions such as closing down those that refuse to comply with the provisions of the education laws. Schools may be required to get prior government approval for certain proposals and to submit periodic reports and to furnish statistics. Penalties may be prescribed and imposed on those that would not 'toe the line'. The government itself could get reports on what actually goes on in schools through its educational inspectors. It could also direct and influence educational activities through consultations and discussions with school managers and boards of governors. What is actually taught could be controlled by a government by prescribing the curricula and conducting terminal examinations through its own agents. To ensure that schools adhere to its policies, government representatives could be appointed into the governing bodies of voluntary agency schools. The knowledge that government has such a wide range of control instruments and mechanisms at its disposal will make the voluntary agencies do their best not to thwart its policies.

In conclusion therefore, by the nature of educational control and the various instruments by which it could be exercised, it is not necessary for a government to take over the management of its school system to be able to exercise effective control over it. There must be other reasons why a Government would want to nationalize its schools. Their ownership and system of management within the national system cannot stop them from being controlled by the State. Whether it is true that this could not be done in Eastern Nigeria is a matter worthy of investigation, and it is under the above principles and practices<sup>that</sup> we will examine the instruments and processes of control before the state take-over of the schools.

### 1.3.3 Management of an Educational System:

Management in education differs from that of business or a shop in a number of ways. First, in the case of the latter, someone or a group of people establish an enterprise and appoint someone else to run it on their behalf. The owners of the business or its Board of Directors determine policies and pass instructions to the manager for execution. He is given some discretion and in the exercise of this, and in carrying out the policy directives, he is expected to be very judicious and to ensure that his actions are in the best interest of the business. The manager knows that if he fails to achieve the objectives of his employers, they will sack him and for this reason, he would do his best to keep the job.

But in the case of managing an education system, the schools were started in the first place by the religious bodies before state intervention. Their managers are not really appointed by the governments. An exception to this however, is the case of Ghana as was shown earlier. Here, some Local Government Authorities establish schools and invite the Missionary Societies to manage them on their behalf. On account of the above difference between management in business, and in education, it is not as easy for a government to sack the education managers in the same way as in business.

Secondly, the objectives of an enterprise are more clear-cut than those of a school system. While for instance, the former may be strictly profit-oriented, the latter is principally meant to render a social service to the society. It is also easier to measure the success or failure of a business enterprise on short term basis say, quarterly or annually. But in the case of education, the objectives are not so clear-cut, and even where they are, they take a much longer time to measure and are not easy to quantify in financial terms. The time element and the nature of education make it even more difficult to be definite on whether the managers or some other factors are to blame in the case of failure. But in business, it is much easier to identify the cause of failure.

In the context of a school system, the function of management is to

organise and administer a variety of programmes and resources - financial, material and personnel (teachers, pupils and non-academic staff), for the fulfilment of the objectives that have been set for education. It is concerned with the day to day activities of the schools aimed at translating policies and programmes into action in order to produce the educated men and women of the society.

The functions of management in education as in business are such that policies are not necessarily determined by the manager. Some one else (in this case, the government), determines the policies and prescribes the programmes by which the desired educational objectives are to be attained and passes them on to the manager to organise and administer.<sup>99</sup> But the problem here is that since the Voluntary Agency managers were not originally appointed by the state, it is more difficult for the latter to get them to enforce its will than it is in business. In practice, what happens is that the agencies are given grants to fulfil certain functions in a field where they have their own interests to consider, and in which they had been on their own before government intervention. It is for this reason that the business of getting them to enforce the official policies has to be more subtle. It is the lack of subtlety on the part of civil servants particularly in the developing nations, in handling this relationship that causes much of the friction between the Voluntary Agencies and the Governments in the management of the school system.

Another important issue here is the whole question of 'Accountability in Education'.<sup>100</sup> Elected Governments as they are at present constituted

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<sup>99</sup>See Brech, E.F.L., The Principles and Practice of Management (3rd edition) Longmans, London, 1975, p. 9.

<sup>100</sup>For the various arguments on the question of accountability, see Levin, H.M., 'A Conceptual Framework for Accountability in Education' in University of Chicago School Review, May 1974, pp. 363-391.

represent the nation as a whole and are believed to be accountable to the people. It is argued that because education is an important social service financed by the state and the people, those who are to be entrusted with its management should be accountable to the people through their elected representatives who form the Government, and not to parochial authorities as represented by the different religious bodies.

The merit of the above argument depends on the historical and the contemporary circumstances - political, religious, economic etc. of the individual society concerned. Where the religious bodies are looked upon with favour by the political authorities, the former are said to be managing the schools on behalf of parents who are both members of the society and the religious groups. But where there is conflict between Church and State, the argument in favour of accountability to the political authority is made to prevail. Thus, the extent to which one can pursue the question of accountability of those who manage a school system depends on the circumstances of the given situation, and for this reason, there can be no one generalization for all human societies.

As we saw earlier in this chapter, the ownership, management and financing of schools vary from place to place. There are really no 'pure' types of arrangements in these respects. For instance, in many cases ownership is very ambiguous. This can be illustrated by a case of mission schools originally put up by local communities and supported by the Missionary Societies with funds from their parent bodies overseas, and the Government stepping in later with financial assistance for additional buildings and maintenance costs. An ambiguous case of management is the example of private schools with government representatives on their governing bodies as in the case of the 'aided' schools in England and Wales. In relation to finance, quite often, it is derived from a mixture of private and government sources. For example, government schools may charge fees and voluntary agency ones may be getting grants from public funds. In spite

of these ambiguities our world-wide examples earlier in this chapter reveal four different broad arrangements made up as follows:

| Ownership           | Management       | Financing        | Example  |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|--|
| 1. Government       | Government       | Government       | USA, Australia, New Zealand, USSR, etc.  |
| 2. Local Government | Voluntary Agency | Government       | Ghana, Kenya   |
| 3. Voluntary Agency | Voluntary Agency | Government       | Irish Republic, Spain, Portugal, Peru, Italy, etc.                                   |
| 4. Voluntary Agency | Voluntary Agency | Voluntary Agency | Parochial schools in the USA, Australia, New Zealand, Public Schools in the UK, etc. |

It is significant to note that even where a school is entirely privately owned managed and financed, the Government is able to exercise control over it through its legislative powers. An example of this is the case of the 'Independent Schools' in the UK. As we saw earlier, they are required to be registered with the DES, and must attain certain laid down standards to qualify for recognition as 'efficient'. In addition, they must "be open for inspection at all reasonable times", and there is also the 'Independent School Tribunal' to receive and investigate complaints against them. Our conclusion from this example is that the ownership and management, as was indicated earlier, do not preclude a Government from exercising control over it.

One of the major criticisms of the partnership arrangement in Eastern Nigeria as will be shown later in Chapter was that it made for many fragmented management units which in turn, made it difficult for a uniform centralized system. One of the aims of the state take-over of schools was to replace the decentralized missionary system of management with a centralized one. On account of this aspect of the conflict, it is necessary for us to examine the main features of centralization and decentralization for the purposes of analysing the partnership system of management and the one that succeeded it.

As Peter Williams<sup>101</sup> has shown, the main features of centralization in the organisation for educational provision can be outlined as follows:

(i) The Ministry of Education or other national bodies make policy decisions:

(ii) Detailed directives are more or less passed down from the centre to the lower level authorities for execution;

(iii) The centre lays down detailed regulations concerning place (schools, catchment area), time (number of days per year), organisation and available resources, content (national syllabus) method and assessment of educational performance;

(iv) Specific amount is made available by the centre and its uses are also specified by the central authority; and

(v) The provision for education at the local level is made to conform with the nationally prescribed standards.

Those who support centralization of educational provision and management argue that it:

(a) makes for overall national interest and discourages sectionalism;

(b) inculcates national values and consciousness over and above those of sections within the nation;

(c) encourages physical and social mobility across regional boundaries through uniform standards and practices;

(d) ensures uniform rate of development and avoids duplication of facilities or too many schools in a particular area;

(e) makes for equality of opportunities and the provision of facilities; and

(f) protects the individual from exploitation by intermediate agencies.

On the other hand, the main features of decentralization can be outlined as follows:

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<sup>101</sup>Williams, P.R.C., Mimeographed Lecture Notes by M.A. Students (Administration and Planning Option), University of London Institute of Education, 1975/76 academic session; see also Kandel, I.L., 'Public Education' in Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, (Vol. 5) op. cit. pp. 419-20.

- (i) It makes for certain decisions to be taken locally on the spot;
- (ii) Centrally taken policy decisions can be adapted to local needs and situations including the content of education;
- (iii) It makes for healthy development and rivalry through the discretionary powers it confers on the local authorities; and
- (iv) It encourages local initiative and innovations which in themselves make for variety in the national system.

Supporters of decentralization argue that:

- (a) Centralization does not take the varying nature of local conditions into sufficient consideration; and that it is under decentralization that national policies could be adapted to local needs and conditions;
- (b) Certain decisions need to be taken on the spot without being referred to the centre. Unless decision-making is somehow decentralized, there could be a lot of delays in getting things done in time;
- (c) People tend to be more committed in carrying out decisions and programmes which they had taken part in working out and therefore, regard as their own, than those passed down to them from above;
- (d) Decentralization encourages experimentation and creativity; and
- (e) It also makes for thorough supervision and control of educational programmes through the discretionary powers of the authorities on the spot.

Comparing the essential features of centralization and decentralization, we note that the main difference lies in the location of the power for control and direction. In the former, it is concentrated at the centre and in the latter, it is divided between the national and the local authorities.<sup>102</sup> It is, however, difficult for either of the two concepts to be practised in an absolute form. Many systems are mixed, with more features of one than the other. There are cases too where features of both are equally present.

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<sup>102</sup>Cf. Kandel, I.L., "Public Education" and White, L.D. "Decentralization" Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (Vols. 3 and 5) op. cit. pp. 419-20 and 43-4 respectively.



The English arrangement, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter, is an example of a system that is neither centralized nor decentralized. The French system of education is a typical example of centralization,<sup>103</sup> while the arrangements in the USA, Western Germany, Switzerland, Argentina, and Australia represent decentralization of powers and functions.<sup>104</sup> Neither of the two concepts can easily be condemned in preference to the other. Whether one or the other is considered more suitable would depend to a large extent, on the general system of the national government of the country concerned. As the above few examples suggest, the obvious tendency is for federated states to adopt decentralization and for unitary states to adopt centralization.

It should also be pointed out that quite often, people tend to overlook the fact that true decentralization involves power-sharing in decision-making between a central authority and a local authority or a voluntary body with some powers of its own. In this connection and as it applies to Eastern Nigeria, the question we shall look at is whether the missionary system of educational management in itself was actually a form of decentralization as was alleged in one of the criticisms of the partnership arrangement.

It is on the above lines that we shall examine the system by which the mission schools were managed (Chapter Four) and the present arrangement under the State School System (Chapter Ten). In the mean time, however, it is important to bear in mind that authority could be centralized or decentralized in either partnership or state monopoly as are respectively illustrated by the practices in France and the Soviet Union discussed earlier. The U.K. arrangement also shows that the elements of the two concepts could be combined on equal proportions.

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<sup>103</sup>OECD: Reviews of National Policies for Education: France, Paris, 1971, p. 24.

<sup>104</sup>Kandel, I.L., "Public Education", in Encyclopedia of Social Sciences (Vol. 5), loc. cit.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BACKGROUND TO EASTERN NIGERIA

#### INTRODUCTION

As was shown in Chapter One, the arrangement for education varies from place to place in accordance with the historical and the contemporary forces at work. To understand the greater intensity of the conflict between Church and State arising partly from the more rapid trend of educational development in Eastern Nigeria as compared with some other parts of the Federation, some knowledge of the background conditions is essential. For instance, before the outbreak of the national crisis, the area which covered only 8.3 per cent of the country's size and contained 22.2 per cent of its estimated population, had 39.7 per cent of all its primary schools and 41.2 per cent of their total enrolment. At the secondary grammar school level, Eastern Nigeria had 39 per cent of all such institutions and 39.4 per cent of their enrolment throughout the country (See Tables I and II, p. 107).

This chapter is therefore intended to (i) examine the question of traditional societies and their response to change; (ii) provide a general picture of the study area and its people - physical environment, ethnic composition and population, social and political organisations, cultural values and characteristics, religious beliefs and the economy all of which to some extent, combined to influence the course of educational development; and (iii) trace the history of the creation of the area as a political entity within the context of Nigeria as one country. The relevance of the third objective lies in the fact that it was not until the area was constituted into a semi-autonomous political unit with responsibility for primary and secondary education, that the main topic of emphasis in this study actually came into focus. From that event onwards, as will be shown later, every

Table I Nigeria: Size and Population (1963)<sup>1</sup>

| Region     | Area in sq. miles | % of the whole | Population 1963 | % of the whole |
|------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| North      | 281,782           | 79.0           | 29,908,559      | 53.6           |
| East       | 29,484            | 8.3            | 12,394,471      | 22.2           |
| West       | 29,100            | 8.1            | 9,487,526       | 17.0           |
| Mid-West   | 14,922            | 4.2            | 2,535,839       | 4.6            |
| Lagos      | 1,381             | 0.4            | 1,443,568       | 2.6            |
| Federation | 356,669           | 100            | 55,769,963      | 100            |

Table II Primary and Secondary Education in Nigeria (1965)<sup>2</sup>

| Primary    |                |            |           |            | Secondary      |            |           |            |
|------------|----------------|------------|-----------|------------|----------------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Region     | No. of Schools | % of whole | Enrolment | % of whole | No. of Schools | % of whole | Enrolment | % of whole |
| North      | 2,743          | 18.3       | 492,829   | 16.9       | 72             | 11.3       | 14,169    | 10.7       |
| East       | 5,949          | 39.7       | 1,199,692 | 41.2       | 247            | 39.0       | 52,438    | 39.4       |
| West       | 4,364          | 29.3       | 737,148   | 25.3       | 195            | 30.8       | 43,292    | 32.6       |
| Mid-West   | 1,788          | 11.9       | 352,179   | 12.1       | 87             | 13.7       | 13,738    | 10.3       |
| Lagos      | 123            | 0.8        | 129,894   | 4.5        | 33             | 5.2        | 9,338     | 7.0        |
| Federation | 14,967         | 100        | 2,911,742 | 100        | 634            | 100        | 132,975   | 100        |

<sup>1</sup>Adapted from Church, R.J.H., *Geographies for Advanced Studies West Africa* (7th ed.) Longman, London, 1974, p. 419; See also Floyd, B., *Eastern Nigeria: A Geographical Review* Macmillan, London, 1969, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup>Adapted from Federal Ministry of Education, *Statistics of Education in Nigeria 1965* (series No. 1. vol. v) Federal Ministry of Education Lagos, pp. 9, 25 and 33.

major political development had some effect on education especially, its provision, management, and control.

## 2.1 Significant Factors in Traditional Society Response to Change, and Education in Particular

As was indicated earlier, this study proposes to show inter alia, that the more enthusiastic response to formal school education in Eastern Nigeria particularly among the Ibos, and the conflict in its management and control can partly be explained by a number of physical and social factors. The most important among them is the structure of the traditional society - its pattern of authority, values, disposition to religion and the distribution of wealth. Before discussing some of the related aspects of the study area, we will first examine the whole question of how the above social phenomena can affect a people's attitude to change in general and in particular, the introduction of western education in a traditional society. The purpose of this is to help us understand more fully, the extent to which the course of educational development was influenced by some features and characteristics of the traditional society in Eastern Nigeria.

Several writers have consistently noted that the Ibos as a people are achievement oriented and that their society gives a great deal of credit to personal achievement and also has a high capacity for change.<sup>3</sup> The assumption that it was the transfer of these characteristics to education that led in part to its more rapid development among the Ibos and their immediate neighbours whom they have been associated with for centuries, raises two important questions: (a) in what ways can one traditional society be different

<sup>3</sup>See Ottenberg, S., 'Ibo Receptivity to Change' in Bascom, W.R. and M.J. Herskovits (eds.); Continuity and Change in African Cultures, University of Chicago Press, 1959 pp. 130-143; and Ndem, E.B.E., Ibos in Contemporary Nigerian Politics: A Study in Group Conflict, Tabansi Press, Onitsha, 1961.

from another? and (b) what are the tendencies in each case?

In his Politics of Modernization, David Apter identifies two sets of value systems as the basis of differentiating one traditional society from another. The first sees human action in terms of its immediate practical result while the other evaluates an action in 'transcendental' terms. He calls the first an 'instrumental' society and the second a 'consummatory' society. According to Apter, instrumental societies respond more quickly to change because all human actions are judged on the basis of their immediate practical results and not necessarily evaluated against the background of the existing social values. On the other hand, consummatory societies feel threatened by anything contrary or new to their traditional way of life. This is because they judge human actions on the basis of their remote consequences - something that cannot be explained by practical experiences. He concludes that modernization is therefore faster in societies with more elements of instrumentalism than in those with more emphasis on consummatory values.<sup>4</sup> We will show presently that Eastern Nigeria, particularly the Ibos, belong to the instrumental group of societies, and ultimately, that their quick response to change was a major factor in the development of formal school education in their midst.

In relation to the influence of pattern of authority in traditional societies, Apter argues that the people of Baganda in Uganda were quicker to accept western education than the Ashantis in Ghana. According to him, the explanation for this was the difference in the structure of authority in both places. In Baganda, authority was highly centralized and in such a situation, once the rulers and their aides accept or reject an innovation, the tendency is for the populace to follow their example. In

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<sup>4</sup>Apter, D., The Politics of Modernization, University of Chicago Press, 1965, pp. 83-106.

the case of Ashanti on the other hand, authority was highly decentralised. For this reason, the acceptance or rejection of an innovation by whatever leaders that may be in existence, would not necessarily affect the reaction of the people in the same way as in a place like Baganda.<sup>5</sup>

In relation to Eastern Nigeria, the authority structure was similar to that of the Ashantis. Unlike the North or the West of Nigeria, there were no powerful traditional rulers in the East whose reaction to Western education could have influenced the people one way or the other as was particularly the case in Northern Nigeria. As will be shown in this chapter, authority was highly decentralised in the East. There was more or less a spontaneous reaction in favour of western education and most towns and villages responded by sponsoring the establishment of their own schools without seeking approval or disapproval from any traditional authority.

Philip Foster's analysis of the influence of egalitarian social values on the expansion of education in Ghana<sup>6</sup> applies also to Eastern Nigeria. Because there was no class distinction in Ghana in the same way as it exists in some of the older developed nations of the world, the demand for education was equal among all the sections of the traditional society. No particular group was so materially well-off as not to care for formal school education for its children. It was popularly desired for the new social status and the prospects of salaried jobs it conferred on its recipients. As will be shown later in this chapter, the traditional society in Eastern Nigeria is an egalitarian one. A man's social status is measured in terms of his personal achievements. The effect of this is that most people struggle all the time to win a place of honour by sheer dint of hard work. When therefore the acquisition of western education

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<sup>5</sup> Apter, D., "The Role of Traditionalism in the Political Modernization of Ghana and Uganda" in the Journal of World Politics, vol. XII, 1 (October, 1960), pp. 45-68.

<sup>6</sup> Foster, P., Education and Social Change in Ghana, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965, p. 247.

became a mark of success, towns and villages competed to establish their own schools in order not to be left behind by their neighbours.

On the attitude of traditional societies to religion and its influence on change, our illustration is drawn from experiences in Northern Nigeria and India.<sup>7</sup> In both places in particular and some others in general, it has been shown that where there was already an established religion before the coming of another one of equal status, members of the already existing faith would not allow themselves or their children to be exposed to the second religion for fear of being converted. The effect of this is that where formal school education is introduced and controlled by members of the second faith, those of the first, tend to be more educationally backward than their neighbours who had no established religion to restrict the spread of the second.

As the above theory applied to Eastern Nigeria, it will be shown in this chapter and the subsequent ones that there was no established religion in the East before the arrival of Christianity, and in section two, that the absence of such religion like Islam among the Hausa-Fulanis in the North, or the Yorubas in the West, had the effect of spreading Christianity and school education more rapidly in the East than elsewhere in the country. While the Moslems in Northern and Western Nigeria would not send their children to be educated in schools founded and managed by Christian Missions for fear of their being converted to Christianity, there was no such fear in the East where Islam or any other strong religion did not exist before the arrival of the Christian Missionaries.

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<sup>7</sup> See Williams, D.H., A Short History of Education in Northern Nigeria, Ministry of Education, Kaduna, 1959; and McCully, B., English Education and the Origins of Indian Nationalism, Columbia University Press, New York, 1940.

On the influence of wealth distribution and the traditional means of livelihood, we note that unlike in Western Nigeria and Ghana from about the early nineteen twenties, there were no rich cocoa farmers in the East. Again, unlike the ~~former~~ colonial territories in East and South Africa or the West Indies, there were no highly developed plantations or mining industries operated by European settlers and employing the indigenous people. In addition, the land in most parts of Eastern Nigeria is unproductive although subsistent agriculture is the main traditional occupation. Land ownership is on individual family basis and each one depends on peasant farming for its livelihood.<sup>8</sup> The cash income in the traditional society was fairly evenly distributed, and as a result, it was easier for towns and villages to raise money communally to build and maintain their own schools.

The effect of the poverty of the land is the tendency among the people to migrate to the cities and other parts of the country in search of jobs. It was from these other places that they learnt of the economic value of education and back home, they spread their experiences and urged their people to send their children to school. It was also from those places, as we shall see later in this chapter, that the Tribal Unions which influenced to a large extent, the establishment of schools on village and town basis, had their origin. On the whole therefore, it was the nature of the economy and the natural desire for survival that made the people perceive education as an alternative means of income. This in turn, led to its rapid expansion and the problems attendant to a system expanding far beyond the capacity of the economy to support it.

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<sup>8</sup>See Helleiner, G.K., Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth In Nigeria, Homewood Press, Illinois, 1966, pp. 44-75.



## 2.2 Physical Setting: Location and Climate

### 2.2.1 Location:

As Table I above shows, the former Eastern Region of Nigeria covered an area of 29,484 square miles or 8.3 per cent of the country's 356.669 square miles. It lies between 4° 15' N and 7° 05'N; and 5° 32' E and 9° 16'E. Thus, the area is located within the humid tropical region of Africa. It is bounded on the South by a 250-mile coastline along the Bight of Biafra, (the Gulf of Guinea) recently renamed the Bight of Bonny by the Federal Military Government.<sup>9</sup> The boundary to the North is formed by the 'Munshi Wall', a colonial demarcation line between the former Eastern and Northern Regions. The boundary districts form parts of the present Benue and Kwara States (see Map, p. 114 ). On the East, the area is bounded by the United Republic of Cameroons and on the West by River Niger and its tributaries. There is a distance of 230 miles of the River separating it from Bendel State,<sup>10</sup> the former Mid-Western State.

### 2.2.3 Climate

The climate of Eastern Nigeria can be divided into two broad seasons - period of steady rainfall(May - October), and period of steady sunshine (November - April). On the average, the territory experiences a tropical wet climate - rainfall in excess of the normal needs of the population and crops. The mean annual rainfall varies from below 70" in the North (around Nsukka) to more than 160" along the coastal areas of Bonny, Port Harcourt Calabar, Yenagoa, Oron and Brass (see map, p. 114 ) On the average, the study area has 135 rainy days in the year (approximately 37 per cent).

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<sup>9</sup>Sunday Renaissance, Sunday, February 23, 1975, p. 3.

<sup>10</sup>Floyd, B., op. cit., pp. 67-8, see also Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria Independence Edition, 1960, pp. 1-3.

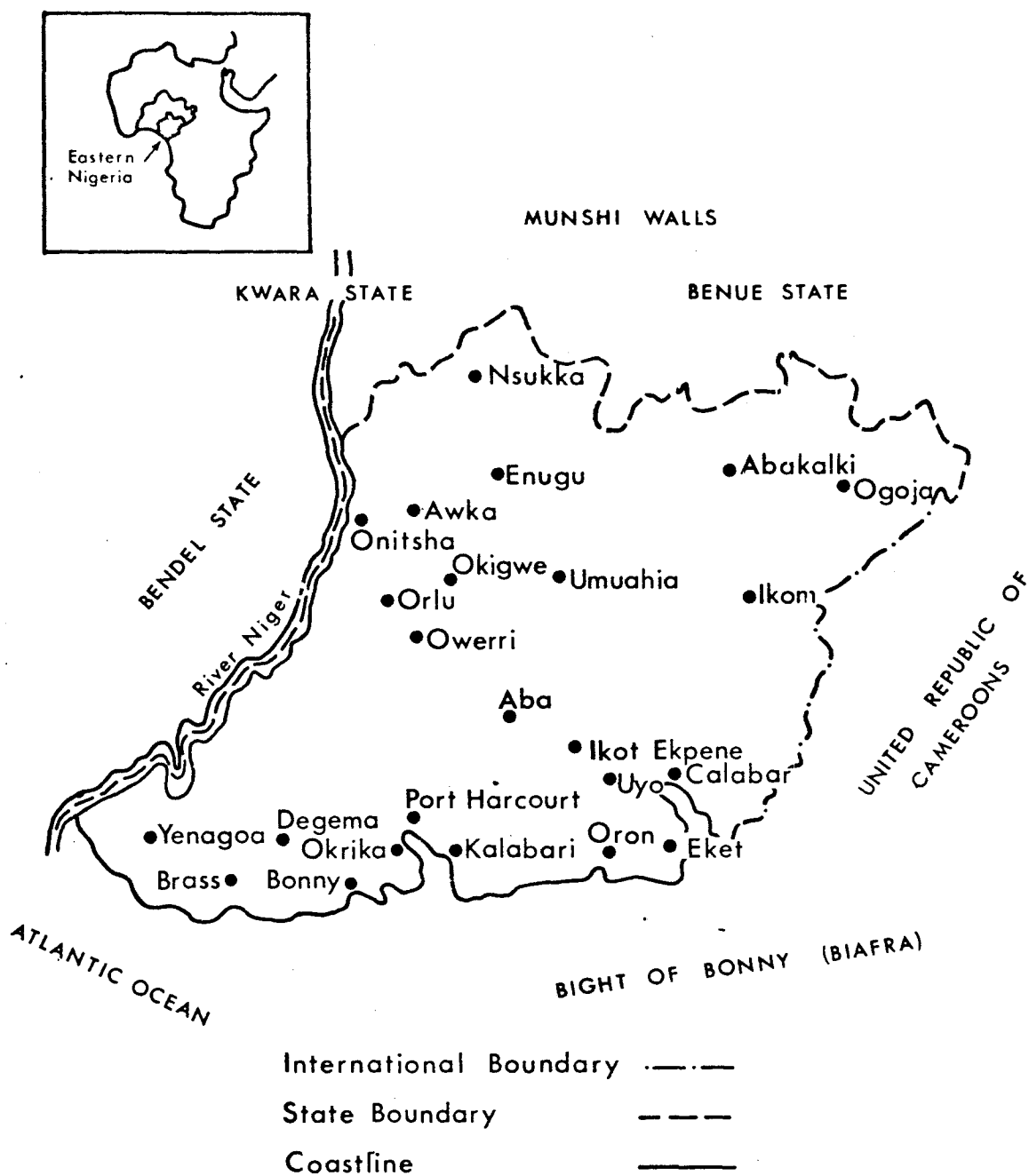


FIG. 1. EASTERN NIGERIA: BOUNDARIES AND MAIN URBAN CENTRES.

<sup>11</sup> Source:— Ministry of Education Eastern Region of Nigeria, Report on the Review of Education System in Eastern Nigeria (Chairman K.O. Dike), Official Document No. 19 of 1962; An Appendix.

In spite of six months of rainfall in the year, Eastern Nigeria has high temperature all the year round. Generally, the mean annual temperature is 75°F with a maximum of 90°F. The hottest period of the year is late dry season which occurs between February and March while the coldest months are July and August.

On the whole, the climate is hostile even to the indigenous population. The high temperature and its daily fluctuations (mean annual range of 7.6°F) causes great discomfort to the people especially, the aged and the infants. The high rainfall which ranges from 90 days in the year around Nsukka in the North to 180 in Bonny around the coast in the south, causes frequent soaking leading to colds and respiratory infections and to increased mortality while it lasts. Throughout the year, school children are exposed to getting wet on the way to and from school for an average of 135 days in the whole area.<sup>12</sup>

## 2.3 Ethnicity and Population

### 2.3.1 Ethnic Groups

The ethnic groups in Eastern Nigeria are broadly divided into four main groups: the Ibos (also spelt Igbo) the Ibibio - Efiks, the Delta-Ijaws and the Small Groups. According to the 1963 census, their population distribution was as shown in Table III below:

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<sup>12</sup>Floyd, B., op. cit. p. 129 ff.

Table III Population Distribution of the Ethnic Groups in Eastern Nigeria: 1963. <sup>13</sup>

| Ethnic Group         | Population | % of the total |
|----------------------|------------|----------------|
| Ibos                 | 7,967,669  | 64.3           |
| Ibibio-Efiks         | 2,789,339  | 22.5           |
| Delta-Ijaws          | 1,095,116  | 8.8            |
| Small Groups         | 439,523    | 3.6            |
| Resident Non-Natives | 102,524    | 0.8            |
| Grand Total          | 12,394,471 | 100.0          |

Although the indigenous population is broadly divided into the above four groups, in general, the people have many characteristics and customs in common. For this reason, the best way to describe and differentiate one group from another is by the identity of its tribal language. Even this method is not foolproof because there is a pattern of bilingualism in many parts of the territory. The areas occupied by the different groups are as shown in Fig. II below and this is followed by a brief description of each one of them.

A. The Ibos: The largest single ethnic group in Eastern Nigeria consists of the Ibo-speaking people and they occupy more than half of the land mass of the study area. They are found in the old provinces of Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri, Umuahia, and parts of Abakaliki and Port Harcourt. There are also the Western Ibos who live west of the River Niger in Bendel State.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Adapted from Population Census of Nigeria 1963 Eastern Region, Vol. II, Federal Census Office, Lagos, Table 3, p. 69.

<sup>14</sup> Forde, D. and G.I. Jones; The Ibo and Ibibio-speaking Peoples of South-Eastern Nigeria, Oxford University Press, 1950, p. 28.

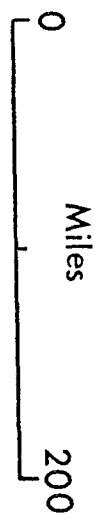
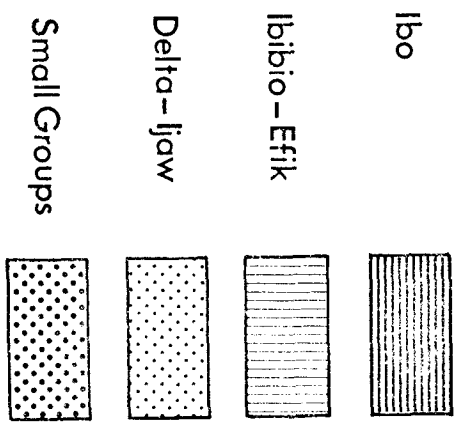
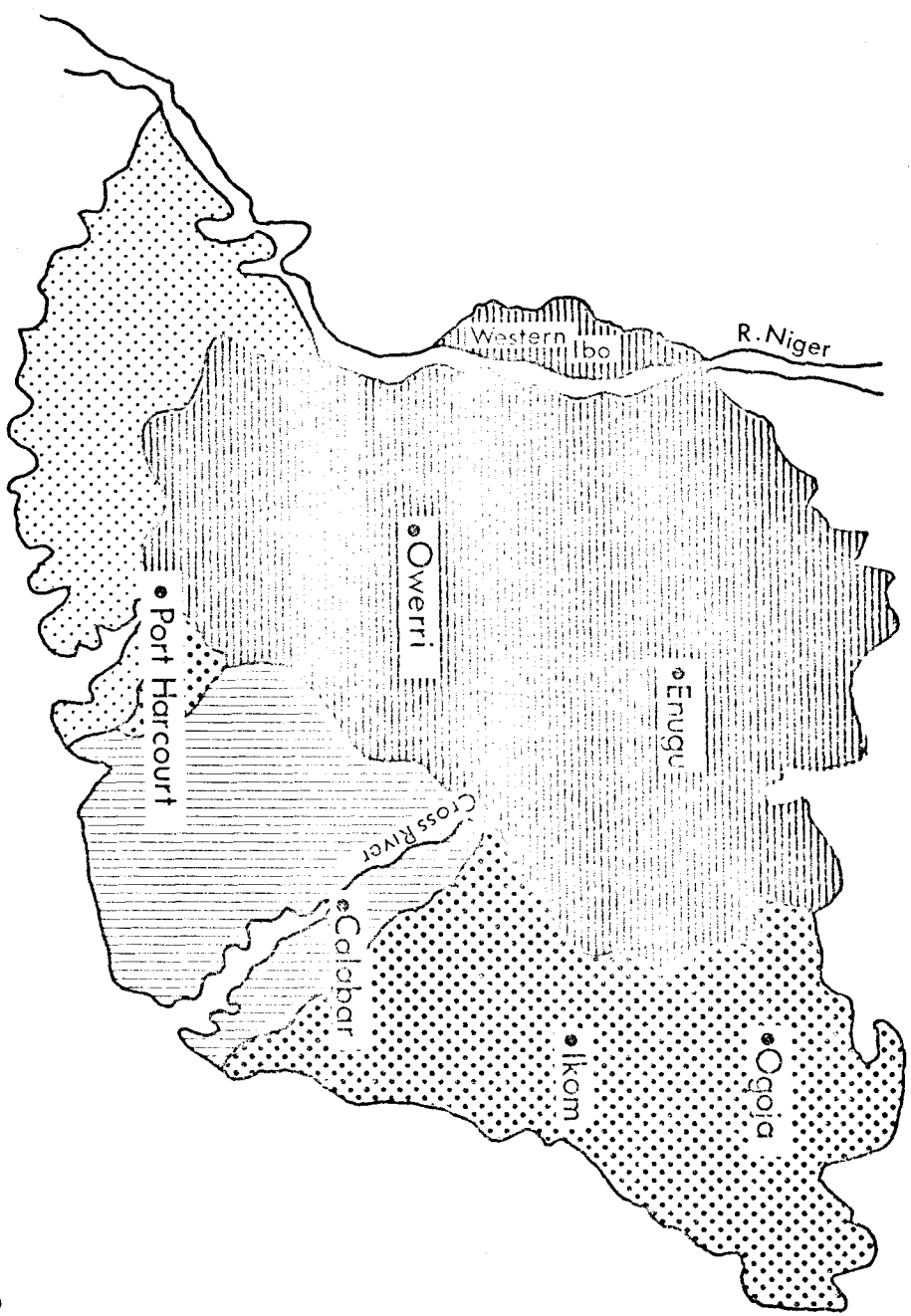


FIG. II. THE PRINCIPAL ETHNIC GROUPS IN EASTERN NIGERIA.  
Source:- Ministry of Information, Eastern Nigeria, op.cit. p.17.

This group of Ibos are outside the study area (see Map, p. 117).

The Ibo territory is bounded on the south by the Niger Delta, on the east by the Imo River. The land rises gently from south northwards to the highlands of Udi hills around Enugu. Along the coast, the land is very fertile. But further inland, it is light, sandy and acidic, and "among the poorest of Nigerian soils".<sup>16</sup> For this reason, a large area of the territory does not produce enough food for its inhabitants.<sup>17</sup>

There is no agreement among the Ibos in respect of their origin. There are many different oral versions of how they reached their present place of abode. Studies so far carried out are themselves inconclusive. There is, however, no disagreement on the point that they have occupied the central portion of their present territory throughout their recorded history. This area, often described as Ibo-heartland, is made up of Okigwe, Orlu and Owerri divisions in Imo State and Awka division in Anambra State (see Map, p. 114). It is from this central portion that the Ibos in most other parts of the country are said to have migrated.<sup>18</sup>

There are seven distinct groups of Ibos based on dialects. They are the Aro-Igbo, Bende-Igbo, Cross-River Igbo, Nsukka-Igbo, Onitsha-Igbo, and Western-Igbo. Their main urban centres are: Aba, Abakaliki, Enugu,

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<sup>16</sup>Buchanan, K.M. and J.C. Pugh; Land and People in Nigeria, London, 1964 (reprint) p.60.

<sup>17</sup>Forde, D. and G.I. Jones; op. cit. p.13.

<sup>18</sup>The view by Basden, G.T. in his Among the Ibos of Nigeria, Frank Cass and Co. Ltd., London, 1966 edition (First edition 1921), p.38 that the Onitsha Ibos migrated from Benin and that their kingship system had its origin and is identical to that of the Benis is highly controversial. For more recent works on the Ibos, see Uchendu, V.C., The Igbo of Southeast Nigeria, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York, 1965, p. 2 ff; Anene, J.C., Southern Nigeria in Transition 1885-1906, Cambridge University Press, 1966, pp. 8, 12 and 19; Forde and Jones, op. cit. pp. 11 and 38; and Isichie, E., The Ibo People and the Europeans: The Genesis of a Relationship - to 1906, Faber and Faber Ltd., London, 1973, pp. 17-43.

Nsukka, Onitsha, Owerri and Umuahia. As a people, the Ibos are aggressive, enterprising and highly individualistic. They are "Furthermore, a people with a great commercial bent. Their aggressive enthusiasm and success as traders have carried them to the four corners of Nigeria and beyond, and they have been likened to the Scots in their canny financial transactions and ability to turn the 'penny-penny' in their direction."<sup>19</sup> In his own assessment, Bishop Shanahan who lived among them for more than forty years, described them as "extremely truthful if they know that you care for them and respect their rights".<sup>20</sup>

The Ibos are like the Yorubas and unlike the Hausas in the readiness with which they adapt to new ideas. But temperamentally, they are different from either the Yorubas or the Hausas "in that they are not only highly competitive of spirit and prone to place great values on achieved status, but they also tend to be dramatic and excitable". A typical Ibo is eager 'to be in the stream of progress' and the spirit of open rivalry is a recurrent feature of Ibo life. The 'go-getter' or the money man is highly admired and respected. The man who just sits quiet is not respected.<sup>21</sup> The Igbo spirit of competition, emulation and rivalry, and their great respect for status and personal achievement when carried into the field of education, led to its rapid expansion among the people and increased the tension between Church and State over its management and control.

B. The Ibibio-Efiks: This is the second largest group in the study area,

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<sup>19</sup>Floyd, B., op. cit. pp. 30-1. See also Jones, G.I., 'Dual Organisation in Ibo Social Structure' Africa, Vol. XIX, 1949, p. 150 and Ottenberg, Phoebe and Simon, Ibo Education and Social Change in Education and Politics in Nigeria ed. Hans N. Weiler, Verlag Rombach, in Briesgan, 1964.

<sup>20</sup>Jordan, J.P., Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria, Clonmore and Reynolds Ltd., Dublin, 1949, p. 77.

<sup>21</sup>Ezera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit., p. 9; See also Ekechi, F.K., Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, op. cit., pp. 6-7.

and also dominant in the now Cross-River State (see Map, p.151). The people occupy the South-Eastern section of the territory and their homeland is mainly along the lower Cross-River Basin and the lowlands of Calabar and Uyo Provinces. Originally, the Efiks spoke a different language from the Ibibios. But after many years of close association between the two groups, they now speak a common language - the Ibibio-Efik. It has six different dialects - Annang, Calabar, Eket, Enyong, Ibino and Uyo. The coastal Ibibio-Efiks were among the earliest in Eastern Nigerian to come into contact with the European traders, first, through the slave trade and later, as middlemen in the palm oil trade which succeeded the former. Christianity was first introduced among them and they have the highest percentage of Christians in Eastern Nigeria. The Ibibio-Efiks have a great deal in common with the Ibos. The two groups live very close together and share common social organisations, values, outlook, motivation and aspiration.<sup>22</sup>

There are conflicting oral traditions concerning the origin of the Ibibio-Efiks. One version classifies them as a semi-Bantu group on the basis of some linguistic affinity with the Bantu congeries of languages in Central, Eastern and Southern Africa. Another account speaks of their migrating to their present abode from the Cameroon Highlands and from the estuary of the Cross River.<sup>23</sup>

The main characteristic of Ibibio-Efikland is its flat nature. Above the sea level, its highest points range between 200 and 300 feet. Generally, the land is sandy and stoneless. On the whole, the area has three distinct physical zones; (i) An area of about 800 square miles of swampy mangrove along the coasts of Calabar, Eket and Oron; (ii) Agricultural strips of land

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. Forde, 2, and G.I. Jones; op. cit. pp. 68-91 and Anene, J.C., op. cit. pp. 14-15.

<sup>23</sup> Floyd, B., op. cit., 25-6.



in the east and west of the Cross River. The western zone is larger than the east and covers an area of about 3,000 square miles, and (iii) On both sides of the river too, there is an extensive area of about 2,500 square miles at present, covered by oil palm trees. It is a rain forest zone which has been cleared over the years.<sup>24</sup>

C. The Delta-Ijaws: This group live in the Niger Delta area along with others who were not originally of their stock. 'Ijaw' is the corrupt form of 'Izon' which the people call themselves. It means 'truth' and they regard themselves as the first inhabitants of the area now known as Nigeria.<sup>25</sup> Their tribal language is classified as Sudanic and is said to be the oldest of the more than two hundred languages in the country and possibly one of the oldest in West Africa.

Also in the Delta areas are a group known as non-Ijaws. The chief among them are the Ibos, and their communities are a mixture of Ijaw and Ibo cultures.<sup>26</sup> Among such towns in the Niger Delta are: Bonny, Brass, Kalabari and Okrika (see fig. 1, p114). With the exception of the last named, the others are bi-lingual. They speak both Ibo and Ijaw languages.<sup>27</sup> The other ethnic groups speak different dialects of the Ijaw language. The Abonnemas who also live in the area trace their ancestry back to old Calabar in Efikland.<sup>28</sup>

Like the coastal Ibibio-Efiks, the people of the Niger Delta were among the first in Eastern Nigeria to come into contact with Europeans. It was first with the Portuguese explorers in the fifteenth century and later with other European slave traders in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

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<sup>24</sup> Forde and Jones; *op. cit.*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>25</sup> Floyd, B., *op. cit.*, pp. 23-4.

<sup>26</sup> See Anene, J.C., *op. cit.* p. 5-9; Alagoa, E.J.; The Small Brave City State: A History of Nembe-Brass in the Delta, University of Ibadan Press, 1964, pp. 7-10 and Isichie, E. *op. cit.*, p. 17.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Anene; *op. cit.* pp. 5-9 and Alagoa, *loc. cit.*

<sup>28</sup> Floyd, B. *loc. cit.*

When the slave trade was abolished, the Delta people became the middlemen between the European merchants and the palm oil producing people of the hinterland.<sup>29</sup> A great proportion of the Delta-Ijaw homeland is covered with the tributaries of the River Niger and swampy creeks.

D. Small Groups: At the North-Eastern part of the territory are a cluster of different linguistic groups. Dominant among them are the Ekois whose homeland is Ogoja. This section of the country was the last to come under the Imperial Authority of Great Britain and the least developed by the time of national independence. Up to date, it is still comparatively one of the least developed areas in Eastern Nigeria. There is a dearth of literature on the small groups. What is well known is that in spite of their close proximity to one another, they differ in language, characteristics and customs<sup>30</sup> and this is unlike the major groups who share much of these in common. The main urban centres of the small groups in the North-East are Ikom and Ogoja. There is a similar group at the extreme South-West of present Cross-River State (see Map, p.117 ).

### 2.3.2. Population

A discussion of population figures for any part of Nigeria must be preceded by some observations necessary for their understanding by outsiders. The first house to house head count throughout the country took place under the Colonial Administration in 1953. Based on the incidents leading to the 'Women's Riot' of 1929<sup>31</sup> in parts of Eastern Nigeria, and the

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<sup>29</sup> See the whole of Dike, K.O., Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1832-1885, Oxford University Press, 1956; and Jones, G.I., The Trading States of Oil River: A Study of Political Development in Eastern Nigeria, London University Press, 1963.

<sup>30</sup> See Anene, J.C., op. cit. pp. 8 and 19; and Alagoa, E.J., op. cit., p. 31.

<sup>31</sup> For an account of this riot and the events leading to it and the people's experiences during the last war years, see Ezera, K., op. cit. pp. 34-6.

people's experiences during the last World War, census in Nigeria by 1953 was still "associated with taxation, land acquisition and military conscription".<sup>32</sup> On account of this, many people deserted their homes to avoid being counted. As a child, the author remembers that in his own village, youngmen and women went into hiding for as long as the head counts lasted. The effect of this attitude was that on the whole, the people were under-counted.

By 1963 on the other hand, census had become associated throughout the country with the allocation of central revenue to the Regions, seats in parliament and provision of social amenities by governments. As a result, the people were this time over-counted. People all over the country struggled to be counted as many times as possible - first and foremost, in their home villages through pressure from their Clan Improvement Unions and second, in the urban centres where they lived.<sup>33</sup> In the process, many were counted more than once to say the least. Because of these irregularities, census figures for any part of the Federation should be seen as mere estimates indicating what the trend is likely to be.

Notwithstanding the attendant anomalies, independent observers<sup>34</sup> agree that "Eastern Nigeria is one of the most densely settled areas in sub-Sahara Africa".<sup>35</sup> The overall density for the area in 1953 was 245 persons per square mile and 420 in 1963. There is however, a great deal of variation in the settlement pattern. For example, in 1953, the overall density for Calabar Division was 50 persons per square mile, while a density

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<sup>32</sup> Floyd, B., op. cit., p. 38.

<sup>33</sup> ibid, p. 40.

<sup>34</sup> See Prothero, R.M., 'The Population of Eastern Nigeria' in The Scottish Geographical Magazine, vol. 71, NO.3 December, 1955 pp. 165-70; Okonjo, C. "A Preliminary Medium Estimate of the 1962 Mid-Year Population of Nigeria" in Caldwell, J.C. and C. Okonjo (eds.); The Population of Tropical Africa (London 1968) pp. 76-96; and Church, R.J.H., op. cit. p. 419.

<sup>35</sup> Floyd, B., op. cit. p. 38 ff.

in excess of 1,400 per square mile was recorded for a section in Orlu Division (now in Imo State). In 1963, the density for Calabar was recorded as 94 persons per square mile. The figure for Orlu Division as a whole was given as 1,632 persons per square mile.<sup>36</sup> (see Fig. 1, p.114).

For the whole of Eastern Nigeria, five density zones were identified in 1963:<sup>37</sup>

- (i) High to very high density areas ranging from 800 to more than 1,200 persons per square mile;
- (ii) Medium to high density areas of 600 to 800 persons per square mile;
- (iii) Medium density areas of 400 to 600 persons per square mile;
- (iv) Low to medium density areas of 200 to 400 persons per square mile; and
- (v) Low density areas of below 200 persons per square mile (see Map, p.125 ).

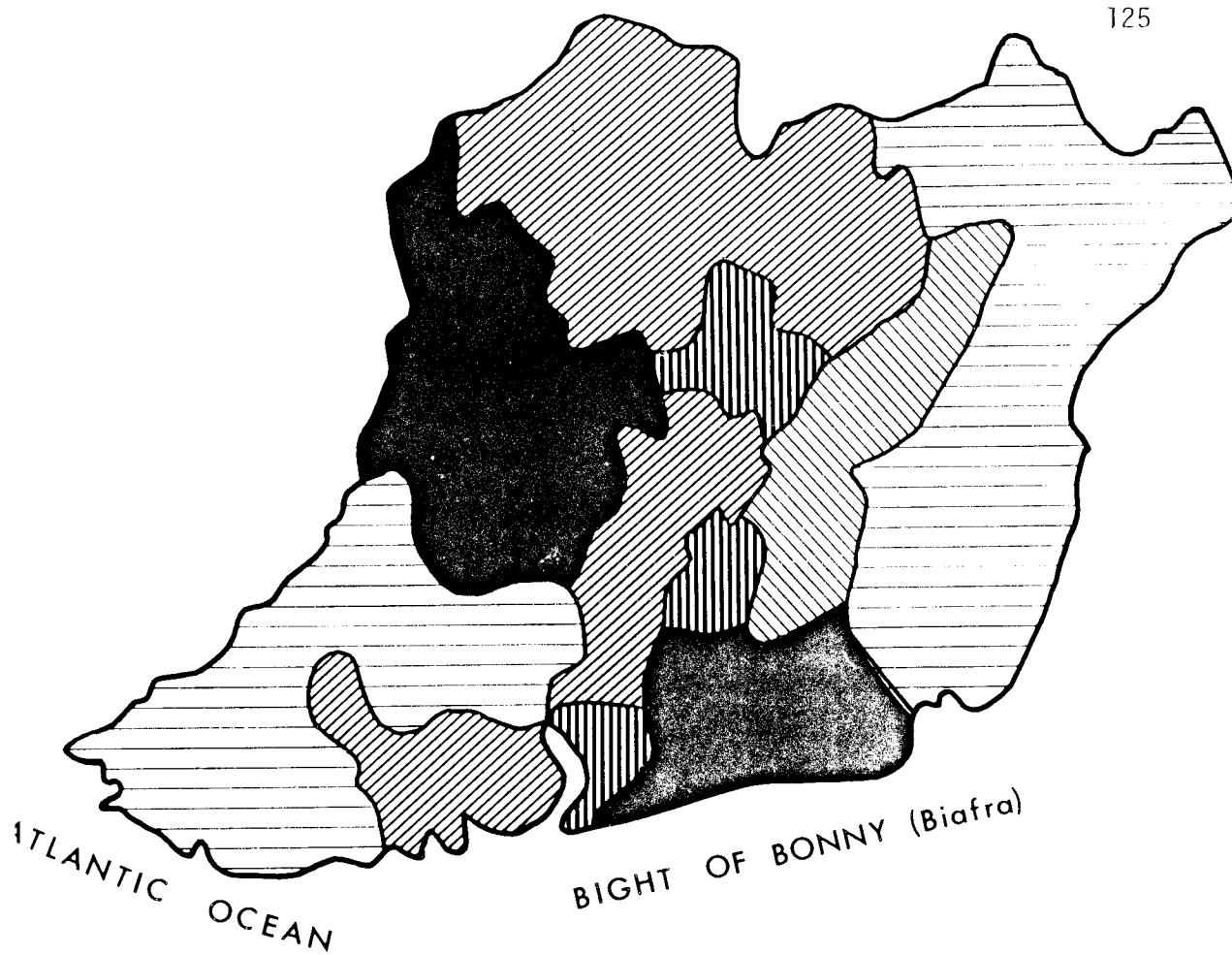
In addition to the above zones, the 1963 census also showed that only 12.8 per cent of the population lived in the urban centres. The rest, (87.2 per cent) lived in rural areas. Again, this should be taken as mere indication because the 'all powerful' Clan Improvement Unions in the area were known to have 'decreed' that all their urban dwellers must return to their villages to be counted. However, after making allowance for the error this may have caused, it is still true that majority of the population in Eastern Nigeria are rural dwellers. The official estimate in 1970<sup>38</sup> records that only about 25 per cent of the entire area's population lived in the urban centres and the remaining 75 per cent in villages, is more likely than the 1963 figures of 12.8 and 87.2 per cent respectively. This is because, and as was indicated earlier, during the 1963 census, the various 'Clan Improvement Unions' pressured many of their members and families

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<sup>36</sup> Floyd, B., *loc. cit.*

<sup>37</sup> *ibid*, pp. 42-43.

<sup>38</sup> Unesco: Education in Nigeria: Educational Projects for External Aid, Vol. 1, Report No. 516, Paris, 1971, p. iii.



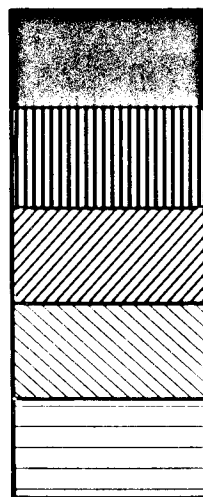
Over 801

601 - 800

401 - 600

201 - 400

Below 200



Miles

0

200

G.III. EASTERN REGION OF NIGERIA 1963<sup>39</sup>: ESTIMATED POPULATION DENSITY ZONES PER SQUARE MILE.

Source:- Floyd, B., op. cit. pp. 40-1.

resident in the urban centres into returning to their home villages to be counted there.

In the adult population, there are at least 115 women to 100 men.

The surplus women are taken care of by the cultural tradition of polygamy which is still widely practised. Birth rate is estimated at 6-7 per woman with 3-4 staying alive after infancy and the birth rate per thousand varied from 45 to above 65. The estimated death rate for the whole country is 30 per thousand of the population. For a long time now, there has been a problem of over population in Eastern Nigeria particularly, in the Ibo-speaking areas.<sup>40</sup>

A recent official estimate by the Federal Military Government gave the population and size of the four states<sup>41</sup> that now make up Eastern Nigeria (see infra 2.8) as follows:

Table IV The Eastern States of Nigeria: Size and Population 1976<sup>42</sup>

| State          | Size: sq.mls.       | Estimated Population    | No. of People per sq. mile |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| Anambra        | 6,089               | 2,943,483               | 483                        |
| Cross-River    | 11,260              | 3,600,000               | 320                        |
| Imo            | 5,032               | 3,280,340               | 652                        |
| Rivers         | 8,175               | 1,800,000               | 220                        |
| Eastern States | 30,556 <sup>a</sup> | 11,623,823 <sup>b</sup> | 380                        |

- (a) Comparing this figure with the size of the former Eastern Region quoted earlier in Table I, there is a difference of 1,072 sq. miles. This is explained by the fact that during the recent creation of more States in Nigeria, some delta districts of Ndoni which were formerly in Bendel (former Mid-Western) State were transferred to join their kith and kin in Rivers State in Eastern Nigeria. See West Africa No. 3,072, 17th May, 1976 pp. 682-3.
- (b) The difference of 770,648 between the 1963 census figures for Eastern Region of Nigeria and the above recent estimate in Table IV can be explained by possible over-counting in 1963 and more importantly, the mass movement of people and the death of a great number of others in parts of Eastern Nigeria during the national crisis and the civil war.

<sup>40</sup> Floyd, B., op. cit. p. 36.

<sup>41</sup> In January, 1976, seven new states were created in Nigeria bringing the total to nineteen. One of the seven new states was in Eastern Nigeria. In all there are now four states, as shown in the above table, in the area. See also section 8 of this chapter.

<sup>42</sup> Adapted from West Africa No 3,072, 17th May, 1976, pp. 682-3.

The estimate gave the population of Nigeria as 56,189,653 and its size as 356.669 square miles. For the whole country, the population density per square mile was quoted as 158 as compared with an average of 380 for the study area. Apart from the Federal Territory of Lagos, parts of the present Anambra and Imo States of Eastern Nigeria are said to be the most densely populated areas of the Federation.<sup>43</sup>

#### 2.4 Social Organisation and Political Structure<sup>44</sup>

As was stated earlier, the major ethnic groups in Eastern Nigeria share common characteristics and customs. This is as a result of either many centuries of close association and/or common ancestry. Whatever differences there may be are in the areas of language and procedural details in the case of customs. In discussing their social organisations and political structure therefore, illustrations are drawn largely from among the Ibos who as we saw earlier, constitute more than 60 per cent of the population and also the dominant group. As a matter of fact, what applies to the Ibos is largely true of the other groups.<sup>45</sup>

The basic social unit in Eastern Nigeria is the localized patrilineage, 'Umunna' among the Ibos and 'Ufok' among the Ibibio-Efiks. It consists of individual families (in the English contexts of the word), whose members are blood relations. They occupy a single hamlet scattering their homesteads on defined area of land. Each compound, as the hamlet may be called, is known by the name of its great ancestor with the prefix 'Ndi' or

<sup>43</sup>See Federal Ministry of Information, Nigeria Handbook Okusanya Printers, Lagos, April 1974, pp. 137-138. and Federal Department of Statistics, Population Census of Nigeria 1952/53. Government Printer, Lagos, p. 3.

<sup>44</sup>In addition to references cited at the appropriate places, materials for this sub-section and the two following were derived from the author's personal knowledge and association with the social and ritual activities of the people as one of them. He had his elementary, secondary and university education in different parts of Iboland and taught as a primary and secondary school teacher in some parts of the four states that now make up Eastern Nigeria. In his own area, he has for many years now, been an active member of some of the social organisations mentioned. He also discussed the related topics with people from different parts of the study area during his research trip to Nigeria in summer, 1975.

<sup>45</sup>Cf. Forde and Jones; op. cit., pp. 9-60 and 67-91.

'Umu' among the Ibos and 'Otung' with the Ibibio-Efiks. Literally translated, 'Ndi' or 'Umi' or 'Otung' means 'the people' or 'children of'. For example, the author comes from 'Ndi-Igwe' Compound in Okoko-Item.

Each lineage group live together under the moral authority of its oldest male member, 'Opara' or 'Okpara' (Ibo) 'Ete-Ekpuk' (Ibibio-Efik). His authority over the younger generation of the families is derived from the ancestors and this is symbolised by his lineage staff, 'Ofo' (Ibo), 'Akama-Ekpo' (Ibibio-Efik). Opara is regarded as the link and the mediator between the ancestors and their living descendants. He alone is entitled to offer sacrifices at the lineage shrine and to the spirits of the ancestors. He is the final arbiter in all internal disputes among members of his compound and he also represents them in all matters involving the wider community.

The custom expects an 'Opara' to rule 'his children' as all members of his group are known, justly and with the fear of the lineage god and the spirits of the ancestors who would not hesitate to punish him if he commits 'ihe ala na aso nso'. This is an offence against the earth goddess or an action considered contrary to natural justice or the people's established code of behaviour. He must be 'nwa-afo' - a direct descendent of the original ancestor. He is also in charge of all the inherited common property of the group such as palm grove and farm land. He collects the proceeds on annual basis and shares out among the male members of the group in order of seniority by age. He gets the largest share, his next in command, the larger one and so on down the line to the youngest.

A cluster of lineage groups make up a village - 'Isi-Ogo' (Ibo), Otung (Ibibio-Efik), and a group of villages make up the clan - 'Mba' (Ibo) 'Idung' or 'Obio' (Ibibio-Efik). Some of the factors determining a clan group may be a remote common ancestry, cultural values, traditions and nearness to one another. The associating villages may also share common farm lands, markets, meeting places, playgrounds and streams. In each clan



there is usually a senior village and its head, known as 'Eze' or 'Obi' (Ibo), 'Obong' or 'Ete-Idung' (Ibibio-Efik), who presides over the clan meetings.

Such a village derives its claim to headship from oral history. It could be that its great ancestor was the first to settle in the area, or that the ancestor was the eldest son of the original founder of the clan far back in remote remembered history. In yet other instances, as in the case of Item, the author's home clan, the senior village may derive its claim from being the traditional custodian of the god commonly worshipped by the entire class. 'Akwañu is the senior village in Item because of its position as the traditional chief priest of 'Otosi', the god of our ancestors.

Each village or clan is governed by a council of elders (Nzuko Ndi ichie). Each lineage group is represented by its head, the 'Opara'. It meets as often as there is need. All members of the council are regarded more or less as equal except that age is highly revered. There is however, no question of concentrating power in a single individual. But in practice, the affairs of the councils are dominated by influential wealthy and title holders or men of great personal achievement. Where formal title taking is not practised, wealth and great personal accomplishment are used as sources of political power and influence. Both groups of men enjoy a great deal of respect, high social status and considerable following.

After reaching a decision on an issue, the presiding village or clan head ratifies it by summarizing the consensus and asking the council to echo approval in unison and this is made to coincide with his hitting the ground with one end of his 'Ofo'. Once this ritual is performed over a decision, it is regarded as binding on every member of the group. It is believed that the earth goddess (Ala) and the ancestral spirits will punish any one who fails to abide by any such decision. It is also the responsibility of all lineage heads to go home and communicate the outcome

of the meeting to their members.

Because of its implication to formal school education, it is important to emphasize the structure of the society as a closely knit entity. Arising from this is the fact that competition among compounds, villages and clans and even among individuals and age groups (see *infra* p.133 ) is simply the people's way of life. Every group measures its progress in relation to what others have done. As this affected education, when the acquisition of academic certificates became identified with great personal achievements and also seen as a passport to higher social status through salaried employment, the spirit of competition manifested itself in open rivalry for the establishment of schools by village communities and ensuring that all their children were enrolled. How this aspect of the social structure affected the development of education in Eastern Nigeria is illustrated by the system of financing mission schools particularly those of the Roman Catholics discussed in Chapter 4.2.2.

In addition to the council of elders, there are such other powerful organisations as the Village or Clan Improvement Unions, the Age Groups, the Titled Men's Societies, secret cults and fraternities such as 'Oboni', 'Aku' and 'Okonko' (Ibo), 'Idiong', 'Ekong' and 'Ekpo' Ibibio-Efik; and 'Ekpe' (Ogoja).<sup>46</sup> All of them participate in one form or the other towards the overall welfare of the community especially, in matters relating to the enforcement of social sanctions. In the field of formal school education, the activities of the Improvement Unions and the Age Groups 'Ndi Uke' (Ibo), 'Nka' (Ibibio-Efik), had a great deal of influence on the course of events. For this reason, the two groups deserve special treatment in this study.

In Eastern Nigeria, as in many other parts of the country, there is

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<sup>46</sup> See Forde and Jones; *op. cit.* pp. 19-20 and 78.

hardly a village or clan without its own Improvement Union. Its origin dates back to the 1930's and 1940's.<sup>47</sup> It was then that the educated migrants (in particular) from rural areas to urban centres, realized that the best salaried jobs went to people with the highest academic qualification. Bearing in mind the close structure of their communities back home in their villages, the migrants (both educated and uneducated), felt lost in their new environments where no body appeared interested in the well being of the other. It was also clear to them that as individuals, they could in no way influence the course of events in the urban communities. There was also the need to remain in close touch with developments back home in the villages.

It was for the above reasons that those of them from the same villages or clans came together to form associations of all their members. As a group, they would be better able to fight for their rights and to protect their common interests. Such unions would also provide them with a platform from which to participate in the affairs of their local communities and their development. As soon as the unions became well established in the urban centres, they set out to accomplish two main objectives namely:

(i) to encourage more of their kith and kin in the villages to come out and join them in their new places of abode; and (ii) to go back home to educate their people on the importance of education as the modern index of progress. To ensure that their people were not left out in the race for ethnic supremacy and the struggle to secure the best jobs, there was need to come together and establish more schools and to encourage parents to send their children to them.

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<sup>47</sup> For the role of Improvement Unions in the development of education in Southern Nigeria as a whole, see Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case. op.cit., pp. 105-11.

By the 1950's, the unions had become so powerful, with branches in all the main urban centres, that they were building primary and secondary schools in their villages and awarding secondary and university scholarships to their able sons and daughters. In the case of the author's village, all school age children were enrolled and the community collectively raised money to pay their fees. His own elder brother was one of the early beneficiaries of the village's secondary school scholarship scheme for its deserving sons and daughters. A neighbouring village, Abiriba was known to have opened its own secondary school in 1951 and sent seven of its sons to Britain and America for university education. It was in the same spirit that Ibibio State College (1946) in Cross River State, Okirika Grammar School (1946) Rivers State, Arondizuogu National High School (1951) and Ibo State College (1952) in Imo State were established. By 1964, there were 38 such secondary schools in former Eastern Region of Nigeria.<sup>48</sup> At the primary level, there was hardly a village without its own school and in some cases, more than one.

The unions competed among each other not only in the establishment of schools and the award of scholarships but also in other areas of local community development such as health and postal facilities, road construction, water and electricity supply and the like. Their existence led to a great deal of inter-village rivalry especially in the field of education. The Christian Missions exploited the situation through indiscriminate opening of schools at the request of, and material support by rival villages. The direct effect of this was the more rapid rate of educational expansion in the East than the other parts of the country as shown in Section Two of this study, chapters Three and Four.

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<sup>48</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria, Annual Report 1964 Official Document No. 4 of 1967, p. 70.

The Age Groups are organised on village or clan basis although each group equates itself with its counterpart in the neighbouring areas and often maintains a kind of loose mutual association. An Age Group is informally started at childhood. At about the age of 18 years, all the males within the same age range, say 15-20 as the case may be, come together to formalize the group. They take a name and appoint their leaders (Officers). Any male who at about the age of 20 years still does not belong to an Age Group, is treated as a social outcast. In many areas, the formal launching of an age group is usually an occasion for elaborate ceremonies.

All public duties are shared among the different groups in a village. They perform such functions as acting as market wardens, clearing roads and playgrounds, cutting forests for communal farming and as village soldiers in times of war or crisis. In addition to all these functions, at present, the age group cult is a powerful instrument for community development. After the Council of Elders at home and the Improvement Union abroad, had decided on specific development projects, the needed funds are collected on age group basis. There is also some keen rivalry among them not only on which pays the highest contribution at any given time but also on which has done most in the development of the community. At present, the author pays an annual due of about £25 into his age group common fund. In his village too, different age groups in competition with one another, have provided such social amenities as electricity, pipe-borne water in some parts, community centre, permanent market stalls and constructed concrete bridges across three streams in the village. An age group treats all its members as 'brothers' and actively identifies itself with the joys and sorrows of any one in the group. For instance, when the author was getting married, his age group donated over £100, provided the sound equipment for the ceremony and hired two buses to make sure that all members attended the wedding. If a member dies, his group has the responsibility of ensuring that

he is properly buried and it also bears a proportion of the burial expenses. Age groups give loans to their members to start some business enterprise and it is a source of great pride if the wealthiest or the most highly educated people in the village come from their stock. All these together make education a highly prized commodity in many parts of Eastern Nigeria.

## 2.5 Traditional Concept of Education and its Implications to the Contemporary Society

In Iboland as in the other parts of the study area, traditionally, education is regarded as a social duty for a social purpose. Its content is the whole culture and it is the duty of the adult members of the society to pass it on to the young for the purpose of making him a useful member of the group. The child learns by indoctrination, observation and imitation. The teacher is the society as a whole and the school is every social situation.

The natural parents of the child are regarded as mere 'trustees'. He belongs to the whole group. His failure is their shame and his success is their glory. As a result of this attitude, children are highly prized and fondly cared for by every member of the lineage group and the wider community in general. The people's regard for children is reflected in such proper names as 'Nwagha', (the child of all); 'Onuoha', (the will of all); 'Nwakaego', (the child is more precious than wealth); 'Ifeyinwa', (there is nothing as valuable as the child); 'Okechukuru', (the gift of God); 'Chinenyenwa' (God gives the child); 'Chinyere', (given by God); 'Uchenna' (the ancestral will); and so on. The child's right-upbringing is a special responsibility of all in the group. It is sacred duty owed to him as a reincarnated ancestor or relative who had done the same for the present adult members when they themselves were like he.

The people believe that only those who had led clean existence in their

previous lives can reincarnate. Every child of a lineage group is seen as a reincarnation of one of its good dead members who has returned to live once more among the people he loves, or a dead outsider who admired the group when he lived and has come to be one of them. On account of this belief, every one is morally and duty bound to make the child welcome, treat him kindly and give him all the training he requires whether in a traditional occupation or in a formal school system. This duty is as much the responsibility of the child's natural parents as that of every one else in the extended family system.

In contemporary society, the implications of the whole concept of the child and his up-bringing as the responsibility of all, are concretized in the wide-spread practice of community establishment of schools through the agency of the Improvement Unions, award of secondary and university scholarships to its deserving sons in particular, and its collective payment of fees for all its children in its primary schools.<sup>49</sup> All these in turn, partly led to rapid increase in the number of schools and their enrolment at both primary and secondary levels, and for greater demand for education. They are also inseparable from the later difficulties of educational finance, management and control as will be shown all through the main body of this study.

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<sup>49</sup>Under this scheme, local communities, in addition to opening their own schools and awarding scholarships to their able children, collectively paid the fees for their pupils in their primary schools. By the system of Assumed Local Contribution (ALC) discussed in Chapter Four of this study, government paid a certain percentage of the costs of education. The balance was expected to be raised mainly through fees by individual pupils. But instead, the bill for the amount to come from this source, based on the total enrolment in a school, was submitted to the Improvement Unions which raised it from the people by various devices and paid it en bloc for all their enrolled children. For instance, in former East Central State (now divided into Amambra and Imo), different communities voluntarily contributed ₦ 547,962 (about £383,600) between 1970 and 1975 in aid of their primary and secondary schools. See East Central State School Board Monthly Bulletin Vol. IV, June 1975, pp. 19, 22-5.

## 2.6 Religion

The traditional society in Eastern Nigeria is a sacred one. The people's social, political and economic life is rigidly regulated by their religious beliefs.<sup>50</sup> Every human behaviour is seen in relation to whether it is pleasing to the gods and the spirits of the ancestors who leave no offence unpunished. The people believe in a variety of deities to whom individuals or groups must appeal to each time they are involved in an area in which such gods exercise influence.<sup>51</sup>

At the head of all deities is the Supreme Spirit, 'Chi-Ukwu', (the great spirit), or 'Chineke' (the creating spirit, Ibo); or Abasi (Ibibio-Efik). The world, created by 'Chineke' is divided into spheres of influence among the lesser gods while He withdraws and watches all activities from a distance. All blessings, rainfall, fertility, good health, plenty of children, (omumu) and the like come from Him. Nothing is ever hidden from 'Chineke'. He sees all things and sends 'Ekwensu' (Satan) to punish all offenders.

Among His (God's) lieutenants in the affairs of man are 'Igwe-ka-ala', 'Ubinukpabi', 'Ala', 'Ajoku', Agwu' and Inyamafia' (Ibo); and collectively known as 'Idem' in Ibibio-Efik. All these gods are independent of one another and directly accountable to 'Chineke'. They are worshipped separately and appealed to for favours in their respective areas of influence. For instance, 'Ala', the goddess of the earth is regarded as a merciful mother who provides soil fertility, temporary homes for the ancestor

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<sup>50</sup>For religious beliefs among the peoples of Eastern Nigeria, see Basden, G.T., op. cit. pp. 215-6; Forde and Jones; op. cit. pp. 25-6 and 78; Meek, C.K.; Law and Authority in a Nigerian Tribe, Oxford University Press 1937, pp. 20-7 and 105; Anene; op. cit. pp. 12-13; Uchendu; op. cit. p. 94; Jordan; op. cit. p. 56 and Ekechi; op. cit. p. 22.

<sup>51</sup>Cf. Forde and Jones; op. cit. pp. 25 and 78.



before their reincarnation, good health, 'Omumu' (plenty of children) and physical strength. She is the queen of the underworld and owns all men whether dead or alive. No one can hide an action from the ever present 'Ala'. It is there even beneath the mighty oceans. To commit an offence against her, (ihe ala na aso nso) will arouse her anger and that of the ancestors, and the offender and his lineage group must be punished unless something is promptly done to appease them. It is believed that a whole clan or village could be wiped out with an epidemic, famine or destruction by thunder on account of an offence committed by one of its members especially if the priest of the goddess had neglected his duties.

The people believe that 'Chineke' does not receive sacrifices directly from human beings but through a host of intermediaries. "We are too lowly placed to go direct to Chineke", they often say. For this reason, there are no shrines devoted to His worship or any symbols in His image. Prayers and offerings from human beings are directed through one or other of the lesser spirits and His major creations outside man. He is therefore worshipped through the supernatural objective evidence of His existence which include: 'Anyanwu' (the sun) regarded as the symbol of good fortune, wealth and success; 'Onwa' (the moon) regarded as the chief guardian star of human beings; 'Kpakpandu' (the stars) believed to be as many as there are human beings on earth. Each human being has his own personal star, and every shooting star falling from the sky symbolises the passing away (death) of its human counterpart; 'Elu-Igwe' (the sky) is believed to be the abode of 'Chineke' and also regarded as the foundation of all things and from where rain comes; and 'Egbe-Elu-Igwe' or 'Amadioha' (thunder) is regarded as 'Chineke's' instant instrument for punishing abominable offenders.

It is important to understand the religious atmosphere in the traditional society because of its relationship with the more dominant position of the Christian Missions in the educational development of the area than in some other parts of the Federation. Unlike the North and the

<sup>52</sup> West, there was no internationally established religion such as Islam before the arrival of Christianity in the East. The effect of this was that the whole area was seen as a 'pagan land' that must be conquered for Christ, and the missionaries threw in everything to achieve this objective. There was no serious opposition such as Islam posed in the North and West. Secondly, during the British military expeditions in the Eastern Provinces between 1900 and 1910, villages that had already accepted Christianity were spared from attack and instead, given some preferential treatment. To escape from the destructive effects of war, frantic messages and delegations were sent to Christian missionaries by many towns and villages to come and open stations among them.<sup>53</sup> Another important factor was that when the Gospel was first preached to the people, they easily associated the Christian concept of a supreme God with their belief in 'Chineke' or 'Abassi'. All these together accounted for the apparent more enthusiastic acceptance of Christianity in the East than either in the North or the West.

In relating the religious atmosphere to education, it must be realized that the missionaries used schools as an instrument of evangelism, and so, wherever a Church was established, a school followed automatically or vice versa. The direct result of this was that each denomination struggled

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<sup>52</sup> Before the arrival of Christian Missions in these two areas, Islam was already firmly established in large parts. It therefore acted as a check against the spread of the Christian faith among the people. But in the East on the other hand, there was no such religion and so, the whole area was seen as a virgin field for missionary activities. For example, according to the 1963 census, 71 per cent of the population in the North were Muslims and only 10 per cent were Christians. The rest were classified as 'pagans'. In the West, the population was 43 per cent Muslim and 49 per cent Christian, and 8 per cent 'pagan'. In the East, it was 77 per cent Christian, 22 per cent 'pagan' (indigenous religion) and about 1 per cent Muslim (made up of mostly Northern and Western migrants in the area. See Niven, R., The War of Nigerian Unity 1967-70 Evans Brothers Ltd., 1970, pp. 56-7.

<sup>53</sup> Ekechi, F.K., 'Colonialism and Christianity in West Africa: The Igbo Case, 1900-1915' Journal of African History xii, 1 (1971) pp. 103-115. See also Afigbo, A.E.; 'Revolution and Reaction in Eastern Nigeria, 1900-1929' Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria, III (1966) p. 543; Miller, W.R.; Have We Failed in Nigeria? United Society for Christian Literature, London 1947, pp. 80-95; and Hillard, F.H.; A Short History of Education in British West Africa, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., London 1957, pp. 159-160.

to open a school and a church in each village in order to increase its following. Later when the state adopted a policy of greater participation in education, it was discovered that in many places, more schools had been established by different missionary bodies than the communities actually needed. In attempt to rectify this anomaly, there was clash of interests between government and the Churches.

Another issue of great significance is the Catholic majority in the East and its possession of more schools than any other single agency. This is unlike the West where the Catholics are in the minority.<sup>54</sup> For example, in 1964, 40.1 per cent of primary and 34.4 per cent of secondary schools in the East were controlled by the Catholic Mission.<sup>55</sup> Arising from its more rigid attitude on the question of Church and State in education as was shown earlier, and its dominant position in the area, the conflict has been mainly between it and the Governments. The other denominations do not appear to feature as prominently as the Catholic Mission.

The strong position of the Catholic Mission in both religion and education can be explained by a number of factors<sup>56</sup> earlier in the history of missionary activities in the area. The first was that the Catholics under the leadership of Rev. Fr. Shanahan (later Bishop), first studied the religious beliefs and customs of the people. From that, the Mission discovered that the society was very rigidly organised and that an open condemnation of its beliefs and way of life was bound to meet with stiff

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<sup>54</sup>See Abernethy, D.B.; op. cit. pp. 150-1.

<sup>55</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria Annual Report 1964 pp. 56 Table V and 70 Table ix.

<sup>56</sup>For the history of early missionary activities in Eastern Nigeria and the people's response see Jordan, J.P., op. cit. pp. 52-8. and 69; Ekechi, F.K., Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914 op. cit. pp. 14-29; Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. pp. 56-62 and Dike, K.O., Origins of the Niger Mission 1841-1891, University of Ibadan Press, 1957, p. 14; and Ajayi, J.F.; Christian Mission in Nigeria 1841-1891 The Making of a New Elite Longmans, Green and Co. London, 1965, p. 97.

opposition. On the basis of this assumption, the Catholics adopted a policy of not openly criticizing the society and its customs. The Mission preached the Christian concept of God from the indigenous view of Him as illustrated by the peoples' belief in the existence of 'Chineke' and 'Ekpensu'. From there, other Christian creeds were gradually brought in without directly condemning or attacking the indigenous religion. As will be shown in Chapters Three and Four, the Catholics also employed other devices to win more following.

On their part on the other hand, the Protestant Denominations especially the CMS, adopted an attitude of open condemnation of what they called 'the pagan social and religious customs'. Their converts were encouraged to disobey laws and practices which did not conform with Christian ethnics. For example, in 1863, there was a procession of school children (the earliest missionary converts) through the town of Onitsha. It was organised by the C.M.S. The King, Obi Akazua and his son were among the spectators. When Odita, the King's grandson and one of the school children in the procession reached where his father and grandfather sat, he refused to greet the King in the traditional way of kneeling down and bowing the head. He merely bowed his head standing upright. The Missionaries had taught the boy that kneeling down was only proper in praying to God. The king, his son and the entire community were surprised and disappointed at the disrespectful behaviour of little Odita. There were numerous similar instances of more serious nature.<sup>57</sup>

The Protestants saw their mission as dedicated to the abolition and the destruction of all heathen practices and their gods and by so doing, win the land for Christ. The Catholic attitude towards the society, its customs and beliefs appealed more to the people and helped the Missions to win more converts and to open more schools. On the other hand, the Protestant

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<sup>57</sup> Ekechi, F.K.; Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, op. cit. pp. 26, 47-8.

approach alienated a great number of the natives from its own brand of Christianity.<sup>58</sup>

In addition, the Catholic Mission had two other advantages over its rivals. First, from the beginning until the outbreak of the national crisis, majority of Catholic Priests were Europeans while the CMS for example, started its missionary activities in the area with African clergy - mainly liberated slaves from Sierra Leone and the West Indies. Although the domination of top posts in the Catholic Missions by foreigners was later used by its opponents to portray it as a stooge of a white foreign interest - the Irish, at first, the Mission was able to win more converts on account of its predominantly white missionaries. The natives trusted them more than the black ones. In fact, it was not until 1930 that the first Catholic native priest was ordained<sup>59</sup> while the first CMS Nigerian Bishop was consecrated in 1864.<sup>60</sup>

Second, the people saw whitemen in general as the symbol of the superior western culture, and school education as the secret of their power. It was therefore a mark of higher social status to be associated with Europeans by whatever means. Membership of the Catholic Church with its many European Fathers offered the natives an easy access to the coveted association with Europeans. As a corollary, the natives also believed that a Church conducted by a whiteman was superior to one by the black. Partly on account of this, many of the people preferred the Catholic Church to the Protestant ones especially where both of them operated in the same village.

All the above factors taken together is part of the background to the popular saying that the 'Ibos' as representing the people of the study area, "make good Catholics". They are also partly responsible for the more

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<sup>58</sup> ibid, p. 93.

<sup>59</sup> Jordan, J.P., op. cit. p. 255.

<sup>60</sup> Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. p.21.

<sup>61</sup> Abernethy, D.B.; op. cit. p. 56.

dominant position of Catholicism in education in Eastern Nigeria as compared with the other parts of the country. It should also be remembered that the indigenous religion in the East did not constitute as much obstacle to the spread of Christianity as Mohammedanism did in the North and West.

## 2.7 The Economy

The traditional economy in the area is essentially made up of subsistence agriculture and trade. Most families have their own farmlands and are expected to produce most of their food requirements. A family without its own farmland is looked upon with disdain. This emphasis on self-sufficiency makes agriculture the mainstay of the economy especially in the villages. But with the development of urban centres, many people have left the rural areas to settle and trade in these places. However, wherever one lives, there is always a close attachment to the village and its activities through the improvement unions which are most active in places outside the home village.

Apart from farming and trading, there are such other occupations as hunting, tapping of palm wine, fishing, harvesting palm fruits, pottery, carving, weaving and blacksmithing. Traditionally, most people earn their living from more than one occupation at a time. A person may be a farmer, a trader and a native doctor all at the same time. It could also be a combination of any two or more of the other sources of income.

It is important to stress the point that although agriculture is the mainstay of the economy, greater proportion of the land in the area is poor. In the Niger Delta of Rivers State, more than half of the people's homeland is covered by swampy creeks and only very little farming is done. They depend more on fishing and petty trading by water. In large parts of Ibo and Ibibio-Efik areas, the land is very sandy and acidic and severely leached by heavy rainfall. It is mostly dominated by wild oil

palm trees and this makes it further unsuitable for food crops.<sup>62</sup>

On account of its poor soil and the high population density, there is a tendency for the people of Eastern Nigeria to migrate to other parts of the country where they rent farmlands, engage in petty trading, seek salaried employment or do whatever else they are capable of. In the case of the educated ones, nearly all of them leave the villages for the urban centres in all parts of the Federation as soon as they complete their schooling. This group in particular leave in search of jobs - "the essence of going to school", (sic). For example, in 1965, it was estimated that there were 350,000 jobless educated youngmen in all the urban centres in Eastern Region. This number did not include those who had migrated to other parts of the Federation. At the same period, an average of 50,000 young people left school every year to join the unemployment market.<sup>63</sup> Following the adverse effects of the civil war on the economy and rapid increase in enrolment since that date, the figures must have more than doubled by now.

In the modern sector, there are small scale industries mainly in the urban centres. They are made up groups of artisans such as carpenters, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, wrought iron workers, welders, tailors, shoe-makers and bakers. Others are printers, repairers of typewriters and sewing machines, vulcanisers, lorry and bus builders, mechanics for repairing heavy equipment. Some of the products of this sector of the economy include jewellery, plastic travelling bags, and mattresses. The artisans also provide services in such areas as motor-vehicle maintenance, photography, dry cleaning and the repair of clocks, radios and bicycles.<sup>64</sup>

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<sup>62</sup>Church, R.J.H. op.cit. pp. 441-7 and Floyd B.; op. cit. -p. 98-110.

<sup>63</sup>Floyd, B.; op. cit. p. 258.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. ibid., pp. 248-51.

Before the civil war, the large scale industries in Eastern Region were coal mining around Enugu; drilling for petroleum and natural gas and refining crude oil in Port Harcourt, and the outlying districts of Aba and Oguta; brewing establishments at Aba, Onitsha and Umuahia; textile and soap industries at Aba; lumbering and saw milling in Calabar and Obubura; cement and asbestos industries at Calabar, Enugu and Nkalagu; iron and steel works at Emene; tyre manufacture and glass works in Port Harcourt. The main agricultural products are: palm oil and kernels, rubber, cocoa, fruits, vegetables, staple roots, cereal crops, tobacco and furniture woods. The minerals include limestone, iron ore, lead, zinc ore, coal, crude oil and gas. In spite of the industries (large and small) and the mining establishments, in 1966, it was estimated that more than 75 per cent of the population depended on agriculture and that more than 50 per cent of the region's output came from agricultural products.<sup>65</sup>

The Development Plan for Eastern Nigeria 1962-8 envisaged capital and recurrent expenditure of £108,922,000. Two years after it was launched, £20.2 million had been spent mainly on agriculture and industry. The progress report issued in 1965 showed that 29,000 acres of oil palm, 23,000 acres of rubber and 13,000 acres of cocoa were planted. During the same period, the Region invested £4,900,000 in such industrial projects as textiles, flour mills, plastics, shoes, oil refining, ceramics, brewing, glass manufacture, cement works, asbestos roofing sheets, water pipes, vehicle assembly and tyre manufacture. Many of the investments were in partnership with foreign companies.<sup>66</sup>

During the civil war, all the industries and plantations were either

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<sup>65</sup>Floyd, B., op. cit., pp. 251 ff.

<sup>66</sup>Federal Ministry of Economic Development. National Development Plan Progress Report 1964. Chapter 4 Appendix B 'Eastern Nigeria Government Programme' Lagos, 1965. pp. 136-167.



completely destroyed or suffered considerable damages from looting and neglect. Many towns and villages were razed to the ground. Damages to roads, bridges, waterworks and mechanical equipment in former East Central State alone were estimated at over £25 million.<sup>67</sup> By the cessation of hostilities in 1970, the economy was in complete ruins. Although considerable amount of reconstruction work has been accomplished, it will take many more years for the economy to regain its pre-war level. It should also be mentioned that in 1970, the Gross Domestic Product per Capita for the whole country was estimated at about U.S. \$70.<sup>68</sup> Educational institutions suffered in the same way as industrial establishments and this too has posed additional problems for education.

## 2.8 The East in the Political Development of Nigeria

Although the initial contacts between the coastal peoples of what later became Nigeria and Great Britain date back to the first half of the sixteenth century, it was not until the nineteenth century that the developments which led to the creation of Nigeria as a political entity actually took place. With the abolition of the slave trade in 1807, Great Britain intensified her activities along the West Coast of Africa to ensure that slavery was completely eradicated from source. The Southern Nigerian coastal towns of Lagos and Bonny had continued with the trade after its abolition. When persuasion failed to stop it in these two places, British forces attacked and captured their ports in 1851 and 1854 respectively. Although the two events increased British influence along the coast of what later became Nigeria, it was not until after the cession of Lagos to the

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<sup>67</sup> Ministry of Works, Housing and Transport, Report on War Damages to Roads, Bridges, Waterworks and Equipment in the East Central State of Nigeria Official Document No. 3 of 1970 pp. 1-43.

<sup>68</sup> Unesco: Education in Nigeria, Report No. 544, Vol. II Paris, 1971, Annex 1.

British Crown in 1861 that an effective British occupation of any part of the country took place. This was gradually extended into the hinterland and by the end of the first decade of this century, the southern parts of the country had been formed into a single political unit.

Before 1900, parts of what later became the Eastern Region of Nigeria, mainly along the coastal areas, had been proclaimed as the Oil River Protectorate soon after the Berlin Conference in 1885. But in effect, no administrative machinery was set up till 1891.<sup>69</sup> Later, the Protectorate was extended further inland and renamed Niger Coast Protectorate in 1893. In 1900, the Charter of the Royal Niger Company which ruled the area until then, was revoked and the territory was again renamed as the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. At the same time, the responsibility for it was transferred from the Foreign, to the Colonial Office. It was in the same year too that the Protectorate of Northern Nigeria was proclaimed. But it was not until three years later that effective British presence was established throughout the territory. The Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was amalgamated with the Colony of Lagos in 1906 and named the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Until that date, Calabar was the administrative headquarters of the Southern Protectorate. The two sections of Nigeria, North and South were administered as separate territories until 1914 when they were joined together as the Protectorate of Nigeria.

In 1939, the Southern section was divided into Western and Eastern Group of Provinces. Eight years later, in 1947, Regional Houses of Assembly were created in Kaduna for the North, Ibadan for the West and Enugu for the East. As we saw earlier in the introduction, for three years, the Houses of Assembly functioned only in an advisory capacity as they had no executive

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<sup>69</sup> Ezera, K.; op. cit. pp. 12-21; See also Dike, D.O. , Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830-1885 op.cit. pp. 166-181.

powers. It was in 1951 that they were conferred with the status of Regions and given some legislative and executive powers. Responsible Governments were also introduced throughout the country in the same year. The Northern Peoples Congress (N.P.C.) controlled the government in the North, Action Group (AG) in the West, and the National Council of Nigeria and Cameroons later, the National Council of Nigerian Citizens (NCNC) in the East. Regionalism as a permanent feature of Nigeria's political set-up was confirmed in 1954 when wider political powers were extended to the Regions (see Fig. IV). It was in that same year that primary and secondary education was regionalised. Hitherto, it was the responsibility of the central authority in Lagos. Western and Eastern Regions achieved internal self-government in 1957 and the North in 1959. National Independence was achieved on 1st October, 1960.<sup>70</sup>

Until 1954, the former German Colony of Western Cameroons under the United Kingdom Trusteeship, was administered as part of the Eastern Region of Nigeria. But in that year, the territory secured its own legislative assembly and executive council as Southern Cameroons. It achieved internal self-government in 1958 and following a referendum in 1960, the Southern part opted out of the Federation of Nigeria to join the former French territory of Cameroons in a Federation. Western Cameroons, as a part of former Eastern Region, is not included in this study.

In Nigeria itself, the Mid-West was carved out of the former West as the fourth Region in 1963. Following the events of the national crisis which started in January 1966, Nigeria was divided into twelve states on 27th May,

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For detailed account of Nigeria's political development, see the whole of Dike, K.O.; 100 Years of British Rule in Nigeria 1851-1951 (A Reprint of the 1956 Lugard Lectures) Federal Ministry of Information Services, Lagos, 1958; Crowther, M., The Story of Nigeria, Faber and Faber, London, 1962, pp. 242-257; Ezera, K., op. cit., pp. 64-81 and 200-226; and Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Nigeria: The Making of a Nation (Reference Pamphlet 38) London, 1960. pp. 1-52.

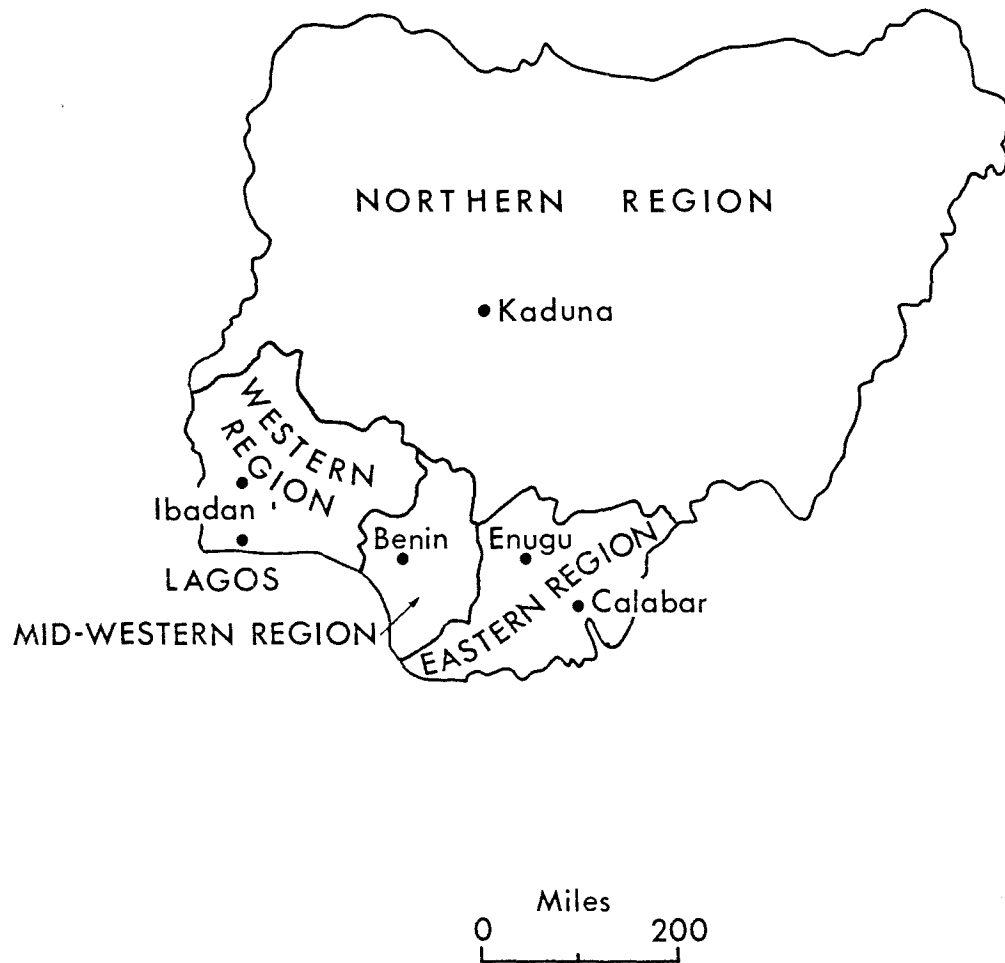


FIG. IV. NIGERIA: SHOWING THE FORMER REGIONS. <sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> Source:- Ezera, K., op.cit. p.3.

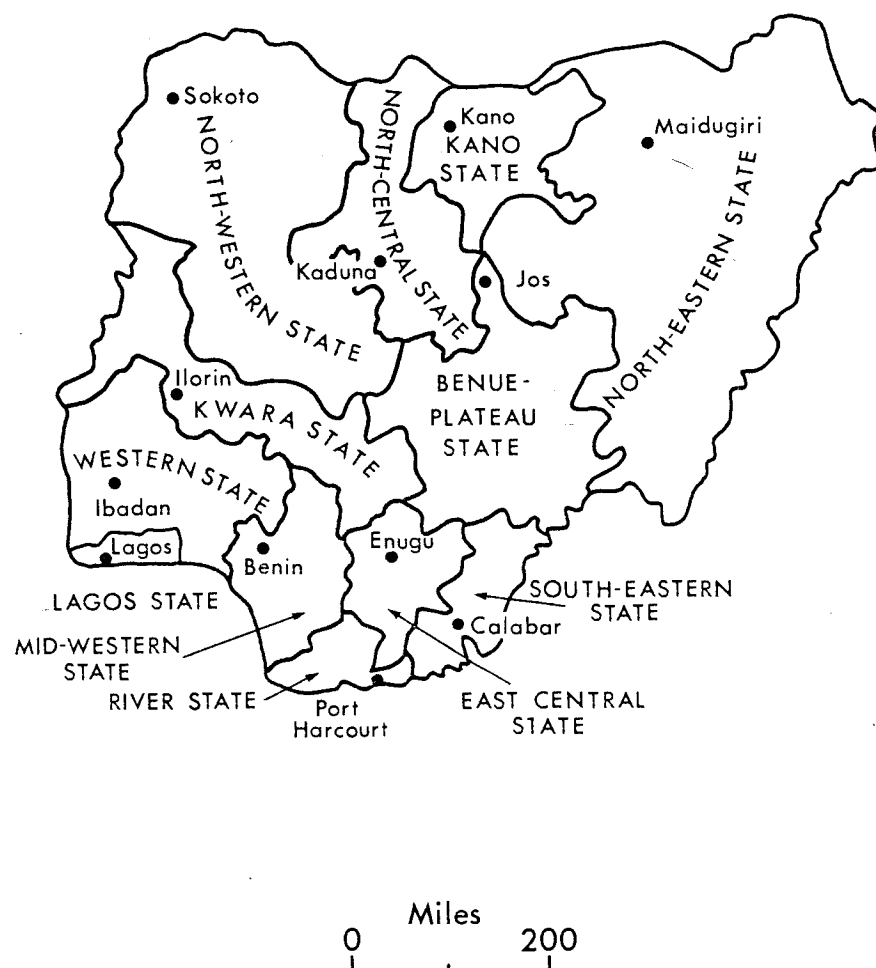
1967 to replace the four regions. Six were created out of the North, and another six from the south. The Mid-West was only renamed while the Federal Territory of Lagos was extended to include parts of former Western Region which itself was renamed the Western State. The former Eastern Region, the study area, was divided into three new states - the East Central, made up of Abakaliki, Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri and Umuahia Province; the Rivers comprising of Degema, Port Harcourt and Yenegoa Provinces; and South-Eastern made up of Annang, Calabar, Ogoja and Uyo Provinces.<sup>72</sup> (see Fig.V). As stated earlier, this study is concerned only with the former Eastern Region mainly from 1951, when the area was actually conferred with the status of a Region within the Federation, to 1967, and the three states into which it was divided in that year up to 1975.

Following wide-spread demand for more states in the country, and as was indicated earlier, seven new states were created in January, 1976. That was after the field work for this study had been completed. As it affected the study area, however, the former East Central was split into Anambra and Imo States. The former is made up of parts of Abekaliki, and the whole of Enugu and Onitsha Provinces; and the latter, the remaining parts of Abakaliki and the whole of Owerri and Umuahia Provinces. Except for minor boundary adjustments, Rivers and former South-Eastern (now Cross-River) States remained cirtually same as prior to January 1976,<sup>73</sup> (see Fig. VI).

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<sup>72</sup>For an objective account of political developments in Nigeria up to 1970, see the whole of Ostheimer, J.M.; Nigerian Politics, Harper and Row, New York, 1973.

<sup>73</sup>See West Africa, No. 3072, loc. cit.



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 FIG. V. NIGERIA: THE TWELVE STATES AND THEIR CAPITALS.  
 74 Source:- UNESCO., Education in Nigeria. Report no. 544, vol. II Paris, 1971. Annex 1.



FIG. VI. NIGERIA: THE NINETEEN STATES AND THEIR CAPITALS.<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> Source:- New Nigeria, Wednesday, February 4, 1976 pp. 1 and 13.

### Summary

From the background to Eastern Nigeria as outlined above, we see that the traditional society is an 'instrumental' one, authority is highly decentralised, there was no internationally well established religion before the arrival of Christianity and the ownership of land and traditional occupations were such that wealth was fairly evenly distributed to the extent that an entire community could easily get together, tax itself on per capita basis to raise money for development projects particularly, the establishment and maintenance of schools. Arising from these characteristics of the traditional society are six significant points which we are to bear in mind for the rest of this study:

First, especially with the Ibos, the dominant group in Eastern Nigeria, great value is attached to achieved rather than ascribed status. For this reason, the people are known to be very hard working in whatever field of endeavour they find themselves. They do this in order to succeed and therefrom, win respect and admiration back home. When the acquisition of academic certificates became a status symbol in Nigeria, every group in the area struggled hard to produce not only the greatest number, but also the highest educated members of the society. As a direct result, there was greater demand for education and in consequence, the establishment of more schools than were actually necessary.

Second, the spirit of rivalry and competition is an acceptable way of life among the people. The implication of this to education is similar to the first. Every village wanted not only a primary but also a secondary school of its own. In some cases, there were more than two of each type where one of each would have been enough.<sup>76</sup> In later years, the indiscriminate

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<sup>76</sup> A typical example of this is the case of Oguta village with a population of under 40,000 inhabitants. It had 6 primary schools - 3 by the Roman Catholic Mission, 2 by the Church Missionary Society and 1 by its local government council. At the secondary level, there were 5 schools in all - 2 by the R.C.M. (1 boys' and 1 girls') and 3 by the local community and private individuals. It was the same picture in most other parts of the study area. See Ministry of Education, Enugu, Official Document No. 17 (cf 1974 pp. 79 and 107).



establishment of schools resulted in high government expenditure on education, and both together, heightened the tension between Church and State in its management and control. For example, at independence in 1960, the comparative proportions of government expenditure on education among the Regions in the Federation were as follows:

Table V: Comparative Expenditure on Education among the Regions (1960)<sup>77</sup>

| Region | Amount     | % of the whole Expenditure |
|--------|------------|----------------------------|
| North  | £4,203,231 | 22.24                      |
| West   | £7,095,960 | 41.10                      |
| East   | £7,287,600 | 45.68                      |

It is important to note that the duplication of educational facilities arising from the social situation was one of the criticisms levelled against the partnership arrangements and was given as one of the reasons for the state take over of schools.<sup>78</sup> We shall return to this and other criticisms against partnership in Chapter Nine.

Third, on account of the people's traditional attitude to children and their up-bringing, in many places, the entire community took over the responsibility of paying school fees for all its children. The result was greater demand for school places and in time, this led to rapid expansion of enrolment and facilities.

Fourth, as a result of the initial Catholic approach to evangelization in the area and some other measures it adopted to outclass its Protestant rivals as will be shown later, majority of the people are Roman Catholics.

<sup>77</sup>Connel, O'James, 'The State and the Organisation of Elementary Education in Nigeria' Education and Politics in Nigeria op. cit. p. 128.

<sup>78</sup>Ministry of Information and Home Affairs; The Economy of the New Public Education System, Enugu, (n.d.) p. 2.

This explains why the Mission founded and controlled more schools than any other single agency, and why the conflict appears to be mainly between it and the different governments. Also and as we saw in Chapter One, association with the secular power is part of the tradition of Protestantism right from the days of Martin Luther and Henry VIII. It is therefore not surprising that the Protestant Missions in Eastern Nigeria tend to be more conciliatory with the Governments than the Roman Catholics.

Fifth, it was not until 1951 that a separate administration was actually constituted for the study area within the Federation of Nigeria. Primary and secondary education was regionalized three years later. The point here is that there was <sup>no</sup> distinctive education policy for Eastern Nigeria in particular before those dates. Until 1954, education was centrally administered for the whole country from Lagos and government policy towards the missions in education was the same in all the Southern Provinces at least.

Sixth, Eastern Nigeria, the study area is small in comparison with its population. It is one of the most thickly populated in sub-Sahara Africa. The land in most places is too poor for food crops despite the fact that agriculture is the mainstay of the economy. As a result of these three main disadvantages (insufficient land space, high population density and poor soil for food production), many of the people are forced to migrate to other parts of the country in search of livelihood. Another effect is that education as a means of escape from poverty and village life into the security of salaried jobs and high social status, is highly prized. It is under the background as outlined in the whole of this chapter that the development of education in the area and the conflict over its management and control should be seen and evaluated.

## SECTION TWO

### THE COLONIAL PHASE - 1847 - 1950

#### INTRODUCTION:

' . . . it must be kept in mind that the Church undertook the business of education not because it regarded education as good in itself, but because it found that it could not do its own proper work without giving its adherents, and especially its clergy, as much of the formal learning as was required for the study of the sacred writings and for the performance of their religious duties'.<sup>1</sup>

The early history of education in Nigeria followed the traditional European pattern, as we saw in Chapter One, of being inseparably tied up with the activities of Christian Churches. Education and evangelization were so interwoven that it is difficult to discuss one without the other. There were no separate schools and churches. Instead, the two were combined into 'School/Church'.<sup>2</sup>

The order of the two words is important. The Missionary wanted to preach the Gospel and to win converts. The people themselves were more interested in acquiring book knowledge - the secret of whiteman's superior power and the key to his culture. In addition, its recipients also got comparatively 'well-paid' jobs in Government offices and mercantile houses. In other words, school education offered Africans "the opportunities to learn

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<sup>1</sup>Boyd, and King; The History of Western Education, op. cit. pp. 100-1.

<sup>2</sup>See Jordan, J.P., Bishop Shanahan of Southern Nigeria op. cit., pp. 96-8; Phillipson, S., Grants-in-Aid of Education in Nigeria, Government Printer, Lagos, 1948, pp. 9-27 (herein after referred to as 'Phillipson's Report'); Fafunwa, A.B., History of Education in Nigeria, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1974, pp. 92-9. Nduka, O., Western Education and the Nigerian Cultural Background, Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 21-40.

the secret of European knowledge and material success".<sup>3</sup> To achieve his own objective, the Missionary had to start with what the people demanded. He also recognised that giving some education was necessary to enable the people to read the Gospel themselves and for producing native assistants in his evangelical work.

It must also be remembered that most of the pioneering missionaries went to Nigeria from Great Britain, and that the nineteenth century, when their work started actively in Africa, was an age of evangelical revival in Europe. To the Britons of Queen Victoria's reign,

'the chief questions ... were ones of atonement and duty.

The chains had to be struck from the African's neck. He must be converted'<sup>4</sup> to Christianity.

Since formal education appeared to be the most effective means of performing this task, the Missionaries had to start with the establishment of schools.

On their part, the Colonial Administrators were interested in education on account of "its possibilities for training better skilled labour force, and inculcating within the 'native populations' a proper respect for the European interpretation of 'law and order'".<sup>5</sup> On the whole therefore, the three main groups, (the native population, the Missionaries and the Colonial Administrators) each had its own need for education. Although their objectives were not entirely similar, all the same, each of them had a specific need for it, and on the basis of this common ground, they all initially went into the school enterprise leaving the conflict of aims to be settled later. Efforts to reconcile them early in the history of education in Nigeria will be discussed in Chapter 4.3 of this study.

<sup>3</sup>Anderson, J., The Struggle for the School: The Interaction of Missionary, Colonial Government and Nationalist Enterprise in the Development of Formal Education in Kenya. Longman Group Ltd., London, 1970, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup>Robinson, R.E., and J. Gallacher; Africa and the Victorians, Macmillan Publishing Co. Ltd., London, 1961, p. 27.

<sup>5</sup>Anderson, J. The Struggle for the School, op. cit., loc. cit.

### CHAPTER THREE

#### THE EAST IN THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHERN NIGERIA 1847-1929

##### 3.1 The Coming of the Missionaries and the Foundations of the Modern School System 1847-1900.

It was during the last quarter of the eighteenth century that a new enlightenment movement swept through Europe. The movement originated partly from the American and French Revolutions and partly from the activities of Christian and Humanitarian organisations. "Enlightenment" itself is a term used "to designate a period of great intellectual activity in the cause of general education and culture, including the preparatory self-emancipation from mere prejudice, convention and tradition".<sup>6</sup> It was believed that such new ways of understanding the world would lead to a new way of mastering it.

The Christian wing of the enlightenment movement gave birth to the idea of emancipating and regenerating the primitive peoples of Asia and Africa through the activities of Christian Missionary Societies. As was indicated earlier, the salvation of the 'Noble Savage' was seen as a duty of Christendom and in pursuit of this objective, the Baptist Mission was founded in 1792, the London Missionary Society in 1795 and the Church Missionary Society in 1799. As a beach-head for their work in West Africa, these missionary bodies opened stations in Freetown, Sierra Leone, the then recently established home for freed African ex-slaves. From there, their activities were extended to other parts of the West Coast of Africa.

The original idea of redeeming and regenerating the primitive peoples of Africa through Christianity was reinforced by the publication

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<sup>6</sup>Encyclopaedia Britannica. Vol. 8, University of Chicago, 1947, p. 613; see also Cassives, Ernest; 'Enlightenment' in Seligman, E.R.A. and Alvin Johnson (eds.); Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences, vol. V. The Macmillan Company, New York, 1942, pp. 547-552.

of Sir Fowell Boxton's book 'The African Slave Trade and its Remedy' in 1840. In it, he argued that the African could only be redeemed through the agency of the 'Bible and the Plough'. Instead of exhausting the African manpower to cultivate the 'New World' and the Indies, it should be turned to productive agriculture in Africa itself. Africa could only be redeemed through industry and the preaching of the Gospel. In addition, European civilization must be introduced among its peoples. Commerce and the Christian Missionary were the two most appropriate instruments for performing the task in Africa.

The activities of Sir Fowell led to the formation of the 'Society for the Extinction of the Slave Trade and Civilization of Africa' in 1840. Prince Albert was its first President and its membership included all the leading men of the day from all the Political Parties in Britain. The following year, the British Government sent out three ships to explore and chart the course of Rivers Niger and Benue and to open up trade relations with their people. Two CMS missionaries, Rev. J.F. Schon and Catechist Samuel Ajayi Crowther, an ex-slave from Yorubaland who was educated at Fourah Bay College and in England where he was ordained in 1842 and consecrated Bishop in 1864, were among the crew. The expedition was further instructed to preach the Christian religion and to open mission stations among the people.<sup>7</sup>

At the first sight, the 1841 expedition appears to have been a complete failure for, within two months of its departure from England, two of the three ships were lost at sea and 54 of its 162 white crew had died of malaria. But on the other hand, the survivors were able to conclude some treaties of friendship between Great Britain and some tribes in West Africa before sailing back to England. One of such treaties was with the Ibos through Obi (King) Ossai of Abo. In addition, Christianity was also preached to the

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<sup>7</sup>Dike, D.O.; Origins of the Niger Mission 1841-1891, op. cit. pp. 4-6; See also Fafunwa A.B.; op. cit. pp. 77-9; and Lewis, L.J., Society, Schools and Progress in Nigeria, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1965, pp. 23-4.

people and Simon Jonas, an Ibo ex-slave who joined the expedition in Sierra Leone was left behind at Abo "to preach the Gospel and expound the mysteries of the written word". It was also the experiences gained from this voyage that decided the CMS to use educated Africans from Sierra Leone for its evangelical activities in West Africa and not Europeans directly and Samuel Ajayi Crowther was chosen to lead the team for Nigeria.<sup>8</sup>

In a nutshell, the above account was the background, in its wider context, to the sending out of the Christian Missionaries who founded the first schools and Churches in Eastern Nigeria and other parts of the country beginning from the later parts of the first half of the nineteenth century. The pioneers were sponsored mainly by Missionary Societies, Humanitarian Organisations and the Government of Great Britain. Each society sent out its own team of Missionaries, and the subject of the section that follows is the beginning of their activities in different parts of the territory.

### 3.1.1 The Church of Scotland Mission (CSM)

Ironically, the credit for opening the first school/church in Eastern Nigeria belongs not to the Church Missionary Society which visited the area in 1841 but to the Church of Scotland Mission. In 1847, six years after the CMS started work in Yorubaland, Rev. Hope-Masterton Waddell of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission arrived in Calabar with a **team** of **seven** other evangelists and started missionary work there. He had earlier worked for eighteen years among the negroes in Jamaica.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup>Dike, K.O., Origins of the Niger Mission 1841-1891 op. cit. p. 7. See also Inyang, P.E.B.; 'Some Mission Schools in Eastern Nigeria Prior to Independence' in Brain Holmes (ed.), Educational Policy and the Mission Schools Case Studies from the British Empire, Routledge and Kegan Paul London, 1967, p. 295; and Berman, E.H.; African Reactions to Missionary Education, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1975, pp. 1-7.

<sup>9</sup>Education Department, Southern Provinces Annual Report 1927, Government Printer, Lagos, p. 5 (Hereinafter this will be referred to as 'Annual Report 19...') see also Ayandele, E.A.; The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914 Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd.; London, 1966, pp. 298-300; and Ajayi, J.F.A., Christian Missions in Nigeria 1841-1891 The Making of a New Elite, Longmans, Green and Co. Ltd., London, 1965, pp. 100-4.

Soon after its arrival, the Mission opened the Duke Town School in Calabar. From there, it moved along the coasts and up to Cross-River and inland establishing schools and churches in the area "before the appearance of the British trader or administrator".<sup>10</sup>

Early in its work, the Mission embarked on preparing text-books in the vernacular, the Efik language as a medium of instruction in its schools. At first, there was little demand for education among the people. Parents would not allow their children to stay in school for any length of time as their services were needed more in the traditional occupations of farming and fishing. But with the proclamation of the Oil River Protectorate in 1885, and the subsequent establishment of Government offices and mercantile firms, the people discovered that only those who had been to school could be employed in those establishments. Educated Africans were being recruited from Sierra Leone, the Gold Coast and the West Indies. It was only then that parents started to allow their children to go to school in the hope that they would secure salaried jobs thereafter.<sup>11</sup>

The first secondary institution, the Hope Waddell Training Institute was opened by the Mission at Calabar in 1895. Its founders had three main objectives in mind:

- (i) to provide a good general education in English;
- (ii) to train boys in various industries such as carpentry, tailoring, engineering and printing; and
- (iii) to systematize the training of teachers and pastors.<sup>12</sup>

By the time the Institute was established, the Mission had gradually extended its activities to other parts of the Protectorate opening primary schools and churches in Efik and Ibibio towns and villages.

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<sup>10</sup>Phillipson's Report op. cit. p. 10.

<sup>11</sup>Cf. Foster, Philip. Education and Social Change in Ghana. Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1965. Chapter II, pp. 38-70.

<sup>12</sup>Annual Report, 1927, loc. cit. see also, Phillipson's Report, op. cit.



### 3.1.2 The Church Missionary Society (CMS)

In the same year as the CSM started work in Calabar, the CMS sent Crowther on a visit to Onitsha. But this was not followed up immediately with the establishment of a station there. It was another ten years before this was done. During the interim period, freed Ibo slaves in Sierra Leone like their Yoruba counterparts persistently urged the Parent Committee of the CMS in London to sponsor their return to their fatherland to help spread the Gospel.<sup>13</sup> When in 1857 an expedition similar to the one of 1841 was being sent to the Niger, a number of them volunteered to join the missionary team on the voyage. It was jointly financed by the British Government and Macgregor Laird, a Liverpool merchant, and commanded by William Baikie. The evangelists in the crew were led by Crowther and the titular leader of the volunteers from Sierra Leone was Rev. John Christopher Taylor whose parents were Ibo ex-slaves.

The expedition arrived at Onitsha on Sunday 26th July 1857 and was warmly received by the King, Obi Akazua and his chiefs. While Bdkie proposed to open up trade links between the town and Great Britain and to establish a factory at Onitsha, Crowther informed the people of his intention to open a mission station for them. At this time, the town was at war with the neighbouring village of Ogidi (see map. fig. VII. p.168), and this was why the people readily accepted all three proposals. Their implementation would confer some advantages on them in their relationship with the inland villages which were constantly at war with Onitsha. A piece of land was immediately allocated for the proposed Mission station and Rev. Taylor was appointed leader of the resident missionaries made up of Ibo ex-slaves from Sierra Leone.

The first school/church started at Onitsha on Sunday, 2nd August 1857

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<sup>13</sup> See Ekechi, F.K.; Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914, op. cit.; pp. 4-5 and Fafunwa, A.B.; op. cit. p. 78.

exactly one week after the expedition reached the town. The school started with 12 children. Soon after, the news of the activities of the Mission at Onitsha spread to the neighbouring villages and towns, and the Ibo spirit of rivalry, competition, and emulation was at once set into motion. Within one year of its arrival the CMS received deputations from Obosi, Ogidi, Nri and Bende (the author's home division) for schools and churches to be established for them too.<sup>14</sup> Commenting on this later Crowther wrote:

"Other towns will not rest satisfied until they have also learned the mystery of reading and writing by which their neighbours may surpass, or put them in the shade".<sup>15</sup>

This was a manifestation of the people's spirit of rivalry and emulation in action. During the period, the Mission responded to as many of such requests as its limited resources, the tribal wars and lack of good roads would permit. There was so much demand for the missionary that in 1862, a team of 27 African Evangelists were sent down to Onitsha to reinforce the volunteers left behind five years earlier.<sup>16</sup> By 1864, the school at Onitsha had an enrolment of 120 pupils.<sup>17</sup>

In that year too, King William Pepple of Bonny wrote a letter to the Bishop of London asking that missionaries be sent to open schools and churches for his people. The letter was passed on to Crowther who in turn, sent missionaries to Bonny where school/church was opened the same year. The King agreed to make an annual payment of £150 as half of its running costs.<sup>18</sup> The next requests came from the Chief of Brass who also agreed to bear half the costs of maintaining the mission station in his town. From there, the mission extended its activities to Nembe, thirty miles up the river and later

<sup>14</sup>Cf. Dike, K.O., Origins of the Niger Mission 1841-1891 op. cit. pp. 7-13 and Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. pp. 4-7; see also Annual Report 1927, p.5.

<sup>15</sup>Quoted in Ekechi, F.K.; op.cit.p. 7.

<sup>16</sup>Inyang, P.E.B. op. cit., p. 295.

<sup>17</sup>Ekechi, F.K., op. cit., p. 24.

<sup>18</sup>Inyang, P.E.B.; op. cit. p. 45

to Kalabari, Okrika and Opobo and by 1883, it had opened schools and churches not only in those places but also at Obosi, Abo, Alenso and Asaba.<sup>19</sup> (see fig. VII, p.168 ).

Based on the experiences of the 1841 expedition, the pioneering work of the CMS was carried out only by African missionaries drawn from among the freed slaves in Sierra Leone and the West Indies. It was not until 1877 that the Society sent out English missionaries to the Niger Pastorate and it was not until that date that it embarked on a large programme of expansion. Following this, by 1895 it had opened a total of 50 schools in both the Yoruba and the Niger Missions. It was in that same year that the Society opened a girl's school at Onitsha and a teacher training college at Iyi-Enu, five miles further north in 1900. It was later transferred to Awka some thirty miles away as St. Mark's Training College in 1904.<sup>20</sup>

Between 1879 and 1880, there were two serious civil up-risings at Onitsha,<sup>21</sup> and in each case, British war ships stationed there to protect British commercial interests, intervened to restore law and order. As a result of the two incidents, the relationship between the missionaries and the British Commercial firms on one hand, and the natives on the other, deteriorated considerably. The people believed that the other two parties were in alliance against them.

During the military operations, Onitsha people took refuge in the neighbouring villages and also spread the news of the aggression against them. They held the Missionaries responsible for the up-risings and their consequences. The war ships were said to have intervened at the request of the Mission authorities. This led to a great deal of doubt in the minds of

<sup>19</sup>Ekechi, F.K.; op. cit. p. 45.

<sup>20</sup>Annual Report 1927, p. 5.

<sup>21</sup>For a full account of the up-risings, see Dike, K.O. Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta 1830-1885, op. cit. p. 207 and Ekechi, F.K.; op. cit. pp. 52-4.

the people concerning the genuineness of the religion being preached by the CMS. They could not understand how a religion whose leaders could invite soldiers to bombard and kill the very people it had come to save could have anything to do with the all-merciful and all-forgiving God it preached about. It was strongly believed that the CMS brand of Christianity must be a mere fabrication.

The importance of the two military operations against Onitsha people and their after-math has been to show the type of relationship that existed between the people and the CMS and the climate of opinion when the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) first arrived in 1885. It worked to the advantage of the new comers who immediately informed the people that the CMS parent body was a splinter group from the Roman Church. It was therefore not surprising that the initial Catholic approach to evangelization was to ally with the people against the CMS and the commercial firms and this won the RCM its first converts.

It is also important to mention that before the arrival of the Catholics, the Anglicans had seen the task of educating and evangelising the people as enormous and beyond their means and had therefore prayed that:

"Merciful God raise up more of thy faithful servants from  
'whatever sections of the Church of Christ' to engage more  
effectually in a grand spiritual welfare of the Igbo people".<sup>22</sup>

Such a prayer would suggest that the CMS was prepared to welcome any Christian Mission into the area. But as we shall see presently, that was not the case.

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<sup>22</sup>A prayer by Rev. J.C. Taylor quoted in Ekechi, F.K. op. cit. p. 70.

### 3.1.3 The Roman Catholic Mission (RCM)

Perhaps in answer to the CMS prayer, it was the RCM which had been operating in parts of Lagos, Yorubaland and Benin Province that turned up in 1885 to help accomplish the enormous task in the East of the Niger River. Before that date, some French firms at Onitsha had invited the Mission to come down and open stations in the area. The news of the invitation was unsettling to the CMS hierarchy which saw it as an attempt to invade its sphere of influence by the Catholics. Immediate measures were taken to forestall this. CMS agents were instructed "to fill the minds of the converts with important passages of scripture (of) which there is no better antidote against the insidious teachings of Romanism."<sup>23</sup> In addition, Bishop Crowther despatched urgent requests to London for more missionary equipment in men and materials to ensure effective occupation of strategic towns and villages before the arrival of the Catholics. Unless this was done, and quickly too, "the Roman Catholics will secure them."<sup>24</sup> It is therefore not surprising that all through their history, the two missions have been the main rivals in matters of education and religion in Eastern Nigeria.

To return to the main point, the RCM arrived at Onitsha on December 5, 1885 under the leadership of Father Joseph Lutz, a French priest who had earlier worked in Sierra Leone for eight years. There were three other priests in the team. As we saw earlier, the relationship between the people and the CMS was at a very low ebb at this time. It was for this reason that the natives warmly welcomed the Catholics as an alternative to the Anglicans.

The new comers were expected to be different from the CMS whom the people blamed for all that they had suffered in the hands of the commercial

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<sup>23</sup>CMS File No. G.3/A.3/0. Rev. Johnson to London Headquarters 27 September, 1882 quoted in Ekechi, F.K.; *op. cit.* p. 71.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.* (Crowther to London, 1883) *loc. cit.*

firms and their military support. It was this expectation that led to giving over a piece of land originally allocated to the Anglicans to the Catholics. At first, they would not accept the land for fear that the CMS would contest its ownership. The King of Onitsha insisted that the Catholics must have the site and later asked Father Lutz to go and talk it over with Bishop Crowther. When the latter was contacted, he replied, "I acquired the land for the cause of God; take it". It was not until this question was settled that the RCM opened its first station in the town. This was on 7th April, 1886, nearly five months after its arrival.<sup>25</sup>

In spite of Bishop Crowther's apparent co-operation by giving up the land, wherever the RCM went, it met with stiff opposition from the CMS. The Anglican agents applied to the letter, the instruction to oppose the introduction of Catholicism. In any place where the CMS was already in existence, everything was done to prevent the RCM from gaining a foothold. To counter this, the Catholics, at first, adopted the strategy of reaching the people through the charitable approach "of erecting hospitals and dispensaries, where the sick and the suffering were treated free or at nominal charge". They also established Christian villages where "run-away slaves or those redeemed by Mission money were protected and educated in the Christian way of life."<sup>26</sup> Social outcasts were also welcomed in the villages.

The Catholics also provided its members with food and clothing. Their Priests approached CMS teachers and Catechists and offered them better salaries and further education opportunities. The result of this was that many of them left the CMS which had no such prospects for them and joined the RCM. Furthermore, from the beginning, the Mission used English as a

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<sup>25</sup>See Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. p. 74 and Jordan, J.P., op. cit., pp. 10-11.

<sup>26</sup>Jordan, J.P., op. cit. p. 14

medium of instruction in its schools while the Anglicans taught in the vernacular. At this time, the ability to speak and write the new language was a passport to comparatively 'well-paid' jobs in Government offices and commercial houses. English was also regarded as the storehouse of the superior European culture which the people were eager to acquire. The particular effect of this was that many new converts and former CMS members crowded Catholic schools to avail themselves the opportunity of learning English. All the circumstances taken together, led to mass exodus of people from the CMS to the RCM. They also helped the Catholics to break through the initial barriers posed by the activities of their rival, and to convert many others, who were not already Christians, to their faith.<sup>27</sup>

Within a short period of its existence at Onitsha, Catholicism became so popular that delegations came from other towns and villages to request the Fathers to come and open schools and Churches for them. In each case, the Mission responded immediately to the call. It did so in the cases of Nkwelle in 1888, and Obosi and Aguleri in 1890. In that year too, the Chief of Oguta, a town of about 30,000 inhabitants situated some sixty miles south-east of Onitsha, led a delegation to Father Lutz for a school and Church to be opened for his people on a piece of land already earmarked for that purpose. In 1898, the entire people of Osamari left the CMS and invited the RCM which responded immediately with a school and a Church. The first Catholic teacher posted to them was a reconverted member of the Anglican Church.<sup>28</sup> By the turn of the century, the RCM reported that it had a total of 25 schools and Churches<sup>29</sup> in Eastern Nigeria (see fig. VII).

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<sup>27</sup>See Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. pp. 76-82 ff.

<sup>28</sup>See Inyang, P.E.B., op. cit. pp. 301-2 and Ekechi, F.K. op. cit. p. 81.

<sup>29</sup>Annual Reports 1927, p. 7.

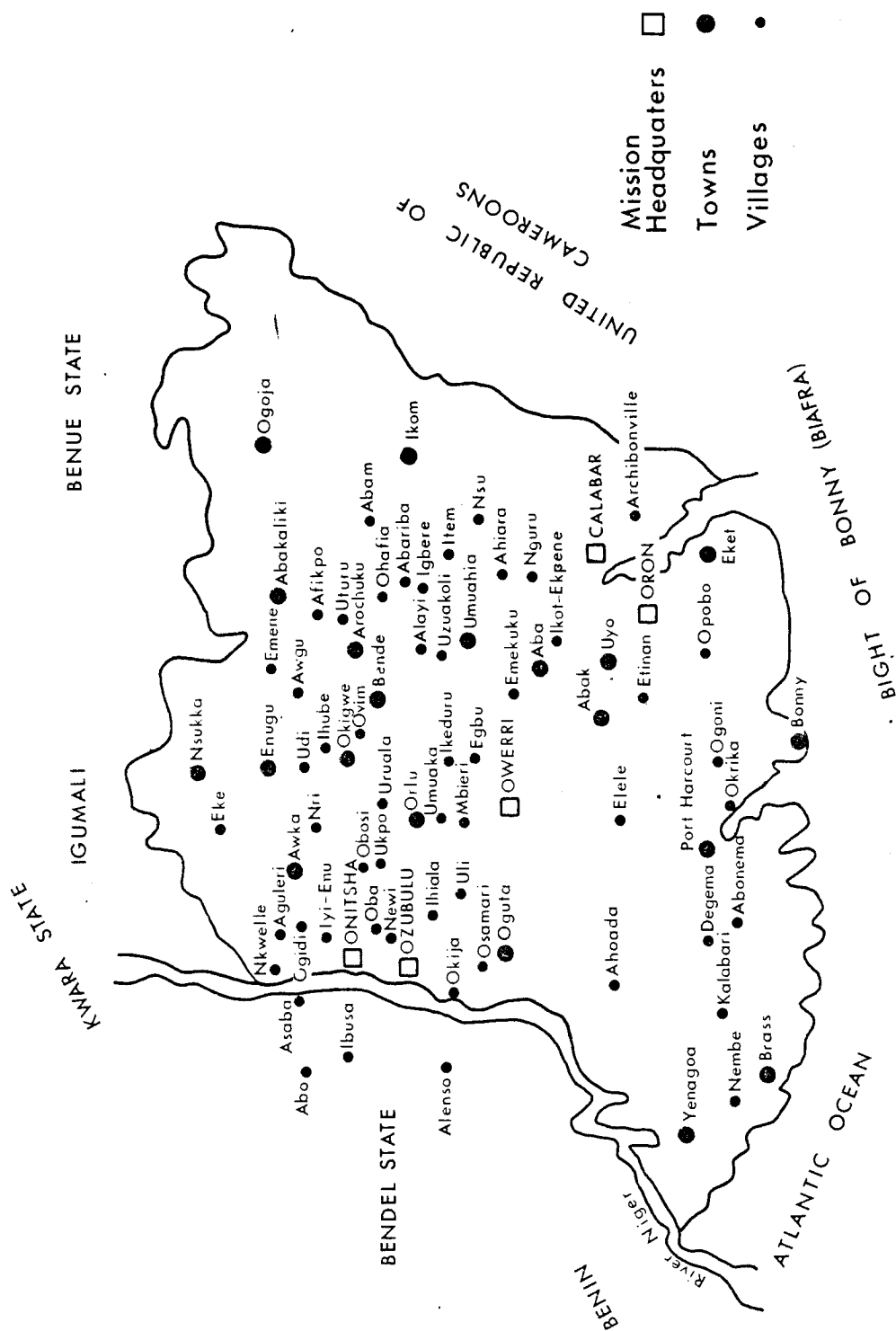


FIG. VII. EASTERN NIGERIA: SOME TOWNS AND VILLAGES OCCUPIED BY THE MISSIONARY SOCIETIES BETWEEN 1847 AND 1929.

Source:- Ekechi, F.K; op. cit. pp.159 and 227.



### 3.1.4 The Primitive Methodist Missionary Society (PMMS)

The Primitive Methodist Missionary Society arrived in Calabar from the Island of Fernada Po in 1894 with an initial team of two missionaries, Rev. R. Fairley and Rev. M. Brown. It is important to note that by this date, the Mission had operated in parts of Lagos and Yorubaland for 52 years. Within twelve months of its arrival, it opened schools and churches in Calabar, Oron and Opobo all in the present Cross-River State. (see Fig. VII).

In 1896, the Mission was invited to Archibonville also in the old Calabar Province to open a school there. The invitation was made by the Chief of the town and Sir Claude McDonald, Her Majesty's Commissioner for the Oil River Protectorate. Both men promised every material assistance to the Methodists in carrying out the job. An agreement to this effect was entered into in the presence of the Commissioner in whose office it was also registered. Under it, the Chief provided land, labour and materials for the building of a school and a Mission station in the town.

When the job was completed, the station opened under the management of Rev. Brown assisted by a native Catechist, Mr. E.E. Esuk and Mr. and Mrs Knox from Sierra Leone. Archibonville was used as the Headquarters of the Mission till 1901 when it was transferred to its station at Oron.<sup>30</sup> By the end of the century, it had opened other schools and churches in different parts of Efik and Ibibiolands from where it later reached Owerri Province in Iboland. It is significant to mention that contrary to what happened at Onitsha between Anglicans and Catholics, there was no hostility or bitter rivalry between the Methodists and the Presbyterians who had been operating in the area since 1847.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>See Inyang, P.E.B., op. cit., pp. 283-5; and Annual Report 1927.

<sup>31</sup>Abernethy, D.B.; op. cit., p. 47.

### 3.1.5 The Foundations of Government Participation in Education

There was no direct official support for education or Government involvement during the period under review. The only form of support was in relation to helping some of the Missionary Societies in the acquisition of sites for schools and Churches or protecting them from acts of hostility from the local populace. Examples of this form of indirect assistance were the role of Sir Claude in the case of the Methodists at Archbonville and the support and protection given to the CMS at Onitsha by the Royal Niger Company which ruled the Oil River Protectorate until 1900.<sup>32</sup> During the early period therefore

"Voluntaryism was in sole possession of the educational field . . . for it was not until the establishment of the British Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900 that any active part was taken by Government in the direction and support of education".<sup>33</sup>

Having said that, it should also be pointed out that:

"This situation was inevitable in the circumstances of the time. It must be remembered that in England education of the masses was still in its infancy, and was being conducted very largely by philanthropic bodies; it would certainly not have occurred to the British Government that it was under any particular obligation to provide education for the masses in West Africa".<sup>34</sup>

Government non-participation in education at this time applied not only to the colonies of Great Britain in Africa but also to its dependencies elsewhere such as the West Indies. For example, in Belize (former British Honduras), the Colonial Government did not concern itself with education until 1850. That was more than forty years after the 'Honduras Free Schools'

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<sup>32</sup>For a detailed account of the relationship between the Royal Niger Company and the CMS at Onitsha, see Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. pp. 91-113; and Cf. Berman, E.H., op. cit. pp. 15-18.

<sup>33</sup>Phillipson's Reports, p. 12.

<sup>34</sup>Hilliard, F.H., A Short History of Education in British West Africa, Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., London, 1957, p. 18.

and those of Christian Missions had been in existence through voluntary efforts, and the partnership between Church and State in education did not become firmly established in the territory until 1879. In other words, in Belize as in Nigeria, education was at first provided entirely by the voluntary efforts of religious bodies and the people. It is, however, interesting to note that the Colonial Government of British Honduras made its first grant of £700 to voluntary bodies for public education in 1819.<sup>35</sup> That was 14 years (1833) before a similar grant was first made in Britain itself by its Government.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of Nigeria, on the other hand, the future role of Government in education had its foundations in the policy it pursued in the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos before it became a part of the Southern Protectorate in 1906. It was this same policy that was extended to the East after 1900, and for this reason, we shall look at it more closely.

From the cession of Lagos to the British Crown in 1861 till 1877, the Colonial Administration did not concern itself with education. The Missionaries themselves had been at work in parts of Lagos and Yorubaland for more than twenty years before any part of the country was declared a British colony. But between 1877 and 1882, the Government made an annual grant of £200 to three Missionary Societies, the CMS, the RCM and the Methodists which were carrying out educational work in and around Lagos. This was the first act of participation by Government in any part of the territory that later became known as Nigeria. The grants were made "on the sole condition that the money was spent on the maintenance of their schools."<sup>37</sup>

The first Government Ordinance affecting any part of the country "for the

<sup>35</sup> Coye, R.S., Educational Policy and Planning in Belize, an unpublished M.A. Dissertation submitted to the University of London Institute of Education, September, 1975, pp. 13-16.

<sup>36</sup> Dent, H.C. The Educational System of England and Wales, op. cit. p. 19.

<sup>37</sup> Annual Report 1926, p.4.

promotion and assistance of Education" was passed by the Legislative Council of the Colony of Gold Coast (now Ghana) and assented to by its Governor, Sir Samuel Rowe, K.C.M.G. on 6th May, 1882. At this time, Lagos was being administered as a part of Gold Coast. One of the provisions of the Ordinance was that one-third of the salary of the "Inspector of Schools for the Gold Coast Colony should be paid of the revenue of the settlement of Lagos".<sup>38</sup>

The Ordinance also provided for a Central Board of Education consisting of the Governor, members of the Executive Council and four other members nominated by the Governor. The Central Board appointed and dissolved Provincial and Local Boards of Education whose functions were to advise it on all matters concerning the establishment of new schools by the Government, and on whether the Mission schools were functioning in accordance with the conditions under which grants were made to them. At first, the Local Boards also had the power to grant certificates to deserving teachers. But in November, 1882, the Ordinance was amended and that power was instead conferred on the Governor to whom candidates were to be recommended by the Central Board after an examination conducted by the Inspector of Schools.

Under the Ordinance too, a common Inspectorate was established for the then British Colonies in West Africa - Gambia, Gold Coast and Lagos, (both of which were then administered as one colony) - and Sierra Leone. There was a Provincial Board of Education for each of the three Colonies with a Chief Inspector who was assisted by an African Sub-Inspector. Their activities were co-ordinated by Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools for the West African Colonies. Between 1882 and 1892, this post was held by Mr. Metcalfe Sunter.

The Ordinance also provided for grants to mission schools in respect

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<sup>38</sup> Annual Report 1926, p. 4.

of buildings and the salaries of teachers and the amount for this was calculated under three separate headings:

- (a) Grants for organisation and discipline and special grants to schools which obtained a large percentage of passes in the annual examination and reached a high standard of general excellence.
- (b) A capitation pass grant for each subject; and
- (c) A capitation grant in proportion to the average attendance of the school.

In January 1883, the grant regulations were amended and as a result, a number of subjects were classified as compulsory and a grant of six pence was made on capitation basis for a pass in any one of them, and another, grant of one shilling per pupil on average attendance.<sup>39</sup>

As we saw earlier, Lagos and its hinterland were separated from Gold Coast in 1886. Following this, the first purely Nigerian Education Ordinance was enacted in 1887. Under it, a new Board of Education was appointed for the territory with a sub-Inspector of schools as its Secretary. Grants to Mission schools were thence to be made on the differential basis of Infant, Primary and Primary and Industrial schools. The Board was also empowered to cancel or withdraw certificates from teachers on the grounds of professional incompetence or misconduct. It also had the power to award scholarships worth £10 per annum to poor children to enable them to receive secondary education.

Elementary education was reorganised into nine standards - 3 Infant Classes, 2 Junior and 4 Senior Primary classes. English was made the language of instruction with the option of conducting the first four classes in the vernacular with English as one of the teaching subjects. Certificates for teachers were classified into six categories including honorary and special honorary ones. The other four were to be awarded

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<sup>39</sup>Ibid, loc. cit.

on the basis of some training. As a result of these new measures, the Education Department reported in 1889 that the Government was in firm control of education in the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos and that "the work of the Board of Education has been thorough, vigorous and practical".<sup>40</sup>

An 'amended and consolidated education rules' came into force in April 1891 and under it, Government directed inter alia, that Latin, Greek, Logic, Trigonometry, Magnetism and Shorthand be taught in all secondary schools. The following year, Mr. Henry Carr, a Yoruba who had served as the Deputy Inspector, was appointed the Inspector of Schools for the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos. In 1899, he was sent to study and report on the conditions of education in the Niger Coast Protectorate which included parts of later Calabar, Bonny, Onitsha and Owerri Provinces. On his return, he reported that the Missions, particularly, the CSM, were doing an impressive work in the area. This was the first move by the Government towards getting involved in the educational matters of the area covered by this study. In the same year, the first Government School in Nigeria was opened in the township of Lagos. A year later, in 1900, it took over the Boys' High School opened earlier by the CMS at Bonny and this was the first positive action of the Government in relation to education in Eastern Nigeria. After the proclamation of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900 too, Mr. J.A. Douglass was appointed its first Inspector of Schools and the education laws operating in Lagos were extended to the rest of the Southern Protectorate.<sup>41</sup>

In spite of the above measures, Government support for education during this period was very meagre. It was in recognition of this that the Inspector appealed for "a more generous support for education by the

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. Ayandele, E.A., The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria 1842-1914, op. cit. pp. 298-300.

Government"; and observed that "a really suitable system of education cannot be cheap and cannot be provided under the voluntary system".<sup>42</sup>

This was in respect of Lagos and its hinterlands. But in the case of the East, it was not until 1900 that the Government became directly involved in education. That was 53 years after the first Mission School was opened in the area, and for all that long period, there was lack of:

- (i) common syllabus, text-books and school hours;
- (ii) adequate supervision of schools;
- (iii) central examination system for pupils and teachers;
- (iv) uniform conditions of service for teachers; and
- (v) adequate financial support and control of education.<sup>43</sup>

Every Mission was the sole authority for its schools as there was no central state machinery to co-ordinate their activities. It could be argued that no such facility could have been possible earlier than 1900. The point here is only to show the effects the absence of it had on education.

In summary, the period 1847 to 1894 witnessed the arrival of the four Missionary societies and the commencement of their work in parts of Eastern Nigeria - the CSM 1847, the CMS 1857, the RCM 1885, and the Methodists 1894. Each of them opened schools and Churches wherever it went often, at the request of the natives and their partial financial support. The rivalry between the Anglican and the Roman Catholic Missions started as soon as both of them were physically present at Onitsha. The local people themselves were more interested in education for the new social status it conferred on its recipient than in the Christian religion per se. But the Missionaries on their part, were more concerned with the conversion

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<sup>42</sup> Annual Report 1926, p. 6; see also Phillipson's Report, pp. 12-13.

<sup>43</sup> Fafunwa, A.B.; op. cit. p. 93.

of the people than education for its own sake. As a compromise between the two objectives, school and Church had to go hand in hand.

Government participation in the form of financial support, direction and control did not start until more than half a century after the Missionaries had been opening schools,<sup>44</sup> and for this reason, the early system of education lacked central planning and co-ordination in any form. The school system therefore owes its origin to the Christian Missions.

### 3.2 Period of Freelance Activity in Education and the Beginning of Active Government Participation 1901-29

#### Introduction:

The proclamation of the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1900 marked the beginning of increased missionary activities. In the first place, it provided greater protection and security for the missionaries and this made it possible and safe for them to extend their activities into the interior parts of the territory. Secondly, it was also from that date that direct state control and assistance for education were introduced in the whole of Southern Nigeria. As we saw earlier, prior to that date, Government efforts had been concentrated in and around Lagos. We shall first examine the educational activities of the Missions during this period and those of the State and finally summarize the educational scene by the close of 1929.

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<sup>44</sup>Cf. Sheffield, J.R., Education in Kenya, Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1973, pp. 8-10.



### 3.2.1 The Missions and the Trend of Educational Development 1901-29

Until 1902, missionary activities were confined mainly along the coastal areas of Eastern Nigeria. There were three main reasons for this. First, the hinterland was yet unexplored and communication between towns and villages was very difficult. There were only foot-paths known only to the local people. Second, the Missions had not enough resources in men and materials for large scale expansion into the strange interior. Finally and perhaps the most important, the Aros who ruled Iboland and parts of the neighbouring tribes would not tolerate any interference by foreigners or even the local people, with their long established areas of influence.

But in 1902, the Aros were conquered by the British Imperial Army after three months of fierce fighting. The military campaign continued to Abakaliki, Afikpo, Okigwe, Awka and Bende (see Fig. VII) and by 1910, the whole of Eastern Nigeria had come under the Imperial Authority of Great Britain.<sup>45</sup> Thus, with the defeat of the Aros and the establishment of law and order in the other parts, the flood-gates of inter-denominational rivalry were thrown wide open. Each of the Societies struggled desperately to pre-empt the other. Urgent messages were despatched to their parent bodies in Europe for more resources in order not to be left in the cold by rival missions. They also believed that the conversion of the Aros to Christian religion would make it easier to win the rest of the people whom they had governed for so long.

In that belief, all the Missions surged towards Arochukwu<sup>46</sup> from their former enclaves around the coasts - the CMS and the RCM from Onitsha, the CSM from Calabar and the Methodist from Oron. All of them vied with one another for the prior occupation of Arochukwu<sup>47</sup> and the towns and villages to, and around it. What happened was similar to the Berlin Conference where European Imperial Powers gathered in 1885 to partition Africa according to

<sup>45</sup>For detailed account of British Conquest of the Aros and Ibo hinterland, see Ekechi, F.K.; op. cit. pp. 114-127.

<sup>46</sup>Arochukwu is the name of Aro homeland.

<sup>47</sup>Ekechi, F.K., op. cit. p. 130.

their political and commercial areas of interest. In the same way, the Christian Missions assembled at Arochukwu in a scramble to divide its former empire into different spheres of Missionary influence.

By 1909, the Missions had become worried over the break-neck rivalry among them. This was particularly so with the Protestant Churches which in that year, convened a meeting at Calabar to discuss the delimitation of Eastern Nigeria into specific areas for each of them. The Conference rose without achieving much because none of the Missions was prepared to give up any area it had already occupied. Another meeting was summoned two years later for the same purpose. Again, they found themselves as divided on the issue as they were at the first conference. But inspite of their differences, they were all agreed that there could be no co-operation between them as a unit, and the Roman Catholic Mission on the question of territories to be occupied and open schools and Churches.<sup>48</sup>

To the Catholics, the message was clear. Although the Protestant Missions were divided among themselves, they were firmly united in their opposition to Catholicism. The RCM therefore decided to redouble its efforts and to employ all the resources at its disposal in order to secure its good share of the newly conquered heathen land. It employed a number weapons in the crusade namely, to open a school wherever it went at no initial cost to the local community, charge no fees in areas where there was yet little or no demand for education and to lay greater emphasis on the teaching of English in its schools which had earlier won it many converts at Onitsha. The Protestant Missions on the other hand, charged fees and still refused to teach English contrary to Government directive. The Catholic strategy paid off as many more people went to its schools than the Protestant ones.<sup>49</sup>

In the rat-race of inter-denominational rivalry, all the Missions

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<sup>48</sup> ibid, pp. 135-7.

<sup>49</sup> ibid, p. 137.

employed similar tactics to outmanoeuvre the other. Wherever one of them occupied first, every possible 'behind-the-scene' move was made to prevent another from gaining a foot-hold there. This was more often the case between the Catholics on one hand, and each of the Protestant Missions on the other especially, the CMS. The two denominations were at the forefront of the rivalry and this explains why they receive greater treatment in this study. The CMS for example, allied with the blacksmiths at Awka where it arrived first, to thwart Catholic move to open a station in the town. The RCM retaliated at Aguleri, Igbariam and Ozubulu where it made it almost impossible for the CMS to be received by the people.<sup>50</sup>

Turning to the actual educational activities of the Missions during the period, the first Catholic school in Calabar Province was opened by Father Dermont in 1903.<sup>51</sup> Two years later, Father Shanahan, later consecrated bishop in 1920, took over the headship of the Lower Niger Prefecture as the Roman Catholic Mission to Eastern Nigeria was called. By 1906, it had opened schools and churches at Uli, Ihiala, Okija, Isingwu, Iboro, Ukpo, Oba, Newi and Ozubulu (see Fig. VII). In 1907 the last named town was selected as its headquarters for the interior missionary activities, and the following year, a resident priest, Father Duhaze was posted there.<sup>52</sup>

Earlier in 1906 when the Education Advisory Council for Southern Nigeria was established, Father Shanahan was appointed one of its first members.<sup>53</sup> In July, 1908, the Prefecture had a total of 27 schools with an enrolment of 2,793 pupils and 1,578 non-schooling catechumens.<sup>54</sup> In 1912,

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<sup>50</sup>For detailed account of what each Mission did to exclude the other from places it occupied first and the relationship between them in the struggle, see Ekechi, F.K., op. cit., pp. 137-141 and Abernethy, D.B.; op. cit. pp. 44-9.

<sup>51</sup>Jordan, J.P.; op. cit. p. 36.

<sup>52</sup>ibid., p. 43.

<sup>53</sup>ibid., p. 81.

<sup>54</sup>ibid., p. 59.

the Mission reported that it had opened 43 schools in Onitsha and Calabar Provinces within the past six years.<sup>55</sup> Its first school at Okigwe, some 70 miles east of Onitsha was opened a year later and by the close of it, Father Shanahan reported that his Mission had a total of 50 schools in Ibo hinterland.<sup>56</sup> In 1918, the Catholics had 253 schools in Eastern Nigeria - 149 in Iboland and 104 in the other parts of the territory.<sup>57</sup> It was during that same year that the Mission reached and opened schools and Churches at Enugu and Eke some 65 miles north of Onitsha and later went on to Nsukka, 40 miles further north. The Church reported a membership of 70,000 in 1920 and added that half of that number was made up to school children. Seven years later, there was a total of 1,000 Catholic primary schools with an enrolment of 60,000 pupils throughout Eastern Nigeria. The Mission had extended its activities to almost every part of the territory.<sup>58</sup>

As we saw earlier, from its arrival in 1857 till early this century, the CMS concentrated its efforts in and around Onitsha and Bonny. Like the other missions, it did not venture far into the hinterland. But in 1900, it was invited to Owerri some 60 miles from Onitsha by Mr. Leslie Probyn, the British Commissioner there who saw the place as a fertile ground for missionary work. The Mission opened its first school/church in the town in 1903 and another at Egbu, in the East of Owerri the following year. It was from these two places that it continued its drive into the interior parts of Iboland. Following the 'pacification of the hinterland' and the opening up of motor roads and the rail link between Port Harcourt and Enugu completed in 1915, and by 1917, the Mission had reached Aba, Orlu, Okigwe, Umuahia, Enugu, Port Harcourt, Ovim, Nsukka and other towns and villages around these places (see fig. VII)<sup>59</sup> Like the other missions, it opened

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<sup>55</sup>Ibid, p. 82.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid, p. 103.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid, p. 144.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid, p. 246.

<sup>59</sup>Inyang, P.E.B., op. cit. pp. 296-7.

schools and churches wherever it went. Its first secondary school was opened at Onitsha in 1928.

Before 1902, the CSM operated mainly in Efik and Ibibio lands and among the Ibos of the Cross River Basin. But after that date, it extended further inland in the same way as the other Missions. By 1916, it was reported to have opened schools and churches at Arochukwu, Chafia, Abiriba, Igbere, Abam, Afikpo, Abakaliki and other neighbouring towns and villages. Before the end of the third decade of this century, it had reached parts of Ogoja Province, and opened schools and churches too.<sup>60</sup> (see fig. VII).

The Methodist Mission opened its first secondary school for boys at Oron in 1905 and another for girls in Calabar in 1909. The year before, it reported that it had a total of 40 school/churches in Ibibio-Efikland and between that date and 1920, 9 such new stations were opened in the area.<sup>61</sup> In 1922, it had a total of 116 schools with an enrolment of 7,052 pupils in different parts of Southern Nigeria. It reached Uzuakoli that same year and opened the Ibo Boys' Institute consisting of a secondary school and a teacher training department in 1923. Between 1924 and 1929, the Mission had opened schools and churches at Aba, Port Harcourt, Bonny, Okigwe, Ihube, Ovim, Item, Umuahia, Alayi, Enugu, Emene and gone beyond the Iboland to Igumale and Idoma in the present Benue State (see fig. VII).

For many years, the attitude of the Mission as one of the Non-Conformist Churches in England, to the Education Act of 1902, was carried over to its educational work in Nigeria. This was their then opposition to any form of co-operation with government in educational matters. In the early years of their work in Nigeria, the Methodists pursued this same policy and so refused to take advantage of government financial and

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<sup>60</sup> Annual Report, 1927, p. 5.

<sup>61</sup> ib id, p. 4.

regulatory facilities for mission schools. In 1921 however, the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of the Society visited Nigeria from England to study local conditions and needs at first hand. It was after the visit that the Mission abandoned that policy and began to accept State financial aid for education and to run its schools as prescribed by the ordinance and its regulations.<sup>62</sup>

All the Missionary societies in general had moved so fast with their expansion programmes during the period under review that by the close of it, one of the pioneer missionaries reported that "except in isolated areas there is scarcely a town or hamlet in Ibo country without a Church and school."<sup>63</sup> The rate at which Mission schools multiplied during the twenty-nine year period bears testimony to this report. In the case of the RCM for example, its 'Record of Progress' for the period 1906 to 1929 reproduced below, shows a remarkable rate of expansion.

Table VI Roman Catholic Mission, Eastern Nigeria

'Record of Progress' 1906-1929<sup>64</sup>

|                    | 1906  | 1909  | 1912  | 1915   | 1918   | 1921   | 1924    | 1929   |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|---------|--------|
| Catholics          | 1,488 | 2,894 | 5,563 | 7,924  | 13,042 | 25,000 | 40,768  | 81,285 |
| Catechumens        | 1,322 | 1,671 | 5,368 | 12,287 | 37,929 | 71,538 | 108,233 | 88,288 |
| Scholars           | 2,057 | 2,591 | 6,578 | 13,158 | 22,838 | 41,455 | 41,050  | 37,275 |
| Teachers           | 33    | 58    | 124   | 256    | 552    | 927    | 1,178   | 1,947  |
| Schools & Churches | 24    | 43    | 86    | 159    | 355    | 721    | 1,026   | 1,403  |

A similar rate of expansion was also reported by the Protestant Missions. In 1929, for example, the three of them together had a total of 896 registered schools with an enrolment of 48,553 pupils. Their distribution among them was as follows:

<sup>62</sup>Annual Report 1927, p. 8; see also Inyang, P.E.B., op. cit. pp. 284-7.

<sup>63</sup>Basden, G.T.; Niger Ibos Barnes and Noble, London, 1938, p. xvi. (There is also a 1966 edition).

<sup>64</sup>Jordan, J.P., op. cit. p. 40.

Table VII Number and Enrolment of Some Protestant Mission Schools:  
Eastern Nigeria, 1929<sup>65</sup>

| Denomination | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| CMS          | 466            | 24,394    |
| Methodist    | 316            | 13,225    |
| CSM          | 114            | 10,934    |
| Total        | 896            | 48,553    |

When it is recalled that by 1895 the CMS had a total of 50 schools in the whole of Southern Nigeria, and that the Catholics had only 27 in the East by 1908, one is in no doubt that the first three decades of this century were periods of intensive missionary activities in the field of education. It is also interesting to note from the above tables that as early as 1929, the Catholic Mission was already ahead of the combined strength of its Protestant rivals in the ownership of schools although the latter had higher enrolment of pupils.

At the secondary level however, the rate of expansion was not so remarkable. In 1929, only 6 such schools were in existence. Their location, date of foundation and ownership were as shown in Table VIII below.

Table VIII Secondary Schools in Eastern Nigeria, 1929<sup>66</sup>

| School                             | Location | Date of Foundation | Agency     |
|------------------------------------|----------|--------------------|------------|
| 1. Hope Waddell Training Institute | Calabar  | 1895               | CSM        |
| 2. Oron Training Institute         | Oron     | 1905               | Methodist  |
| 3. Duke Town Secondary School      | Calabar  | 1919               | CSM        |
| 4. Ibo Boys' Institute             | Uzuakoli | 1923               | Methodist  |
| 5. Dennis Memorial Grammar School  | Onitsha  | 1928               | CMS        |
| 6. Government College              | Umuahia  | 1929               | Government |

<sup>65</sup>Annual Report 1929, Appendices V and VII, pp. 61-2 and 64-5.

<sup>66</sup>Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. p. 36.

From the above table, the following points are to be noted: of the six secondary schools only one was founded by the Government and it came into existence 34 years after the first by one of the Missions was established; and inspite of the greater number of Catholic primary schools, the Mission had none at the secondary level as of this date. This point is important because in later years, the absence of Catholic secondary schools earlier than when the first one was opened had a significant effect on the relationship between the Mission and the nationalist Government. We shall return to this point later in the study.

During the period too, the Government compalined against the highly fragmented nature of the system by which the mission schools were managed. The entire responsibility for the management of schools in Dioceses and Parishes rested on individual managers with no effective machinery for co-ordinating the work of even the same mission. Within his area of authority each manager was responsible for the organisation, supervision and maintenance of the schools belonging to his denomination; the appointment, dismissal and payment of salaries to teachers. To remedy this anomaly, the Government proposed to the Missions as early as 1913 that it would be "an advantage if some combination were possible among the Managers of schools connected with the different religious societies".<sup>67</sup> The Missions rejected the proposal.

The underlying purpose of the Government propsal was to organise the provision for education on something like provincial basis. By this, one central body in which all the agencies involved were represented would be made responsible for its management and administration instead of the multiplicity of small denominational units as it then operated. If that happened, Government would then be able to make block grants to all the Missions operating in one area and not to individual schools, and this could

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<sup>67</sup>Phillipson's Report, p. 14.



make the process of making grants to schools much simpler than before. But the Missions themselves would not accept any such proposal and the Government could not impose it on them.

The above suggestion so early in the history of education in Eastern Nigeria is important for three main reasons: One, it shows that the criticism of the partnership system for its fragmentation of school administration did not start after the introduction of responsible government. It was a carry-over from the colonial period. Two, Government attempts in later years to introduce a unified system of primary school management met with stiff opposition from the Missions and so widened the gap between them and the state. Three, eventually when the schools were nationalized, the criticism was one of the main reasons given for the action. We shall return to the last two points in sections three and four respectively of this study. In the meantime, let us examine the role and policies of the Government in education during the twenty-nine year period 1901-29.

### 3.2.2 The Role and Educational Policy of the Government 1901-29<sup>68</sup>

As we saw earlier, it was not until 1900 that the Government started to concern itself with education in Eastern Nigeria and the Southern Protectorate in general. Its first steps in this direction were the take-over of the boys' school at Bonny and the appointment of an Inspector of Schools. It also selected the Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar, as a centre for secondary education in the Eastern Provinces and made generous grants to the School to expand its facilities in order to cater for more people in the area.

Under an agreement with the founders of the school, the CSM, concluded

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<sup>68</sup>The author owes much of the materials for this section of the study to the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria, Education Department, Annual Reports 1922-1929; and Phillipson's Report, pp. 1-23.

in 1902, the Government conceded that "religious teaching shall have a prominent place throughout the curriculum". The Mission was to continue with the responsibility for the employment of staff and the admission of students. On its part, the Government was to make the usual grants-in-aid to school on the basis of efficiency and in addition, pay the Mission £10 per annum for every student sent to the school by the Government which also agreed and erected additional buildings for the school at a cost of £10,00.<sup>69</sup>

In 1903, an Education Department was established for the Protectorate and Mr. Douglas was appointed its first Director. He was assisted by 4 Education Officers recruited from England, specially for that purpose. By the end of that year, it was reported that there were 5 primary schools receiving direct financial support from the Government. Of that number, only one was located in the East. The other four were in parts of Western Provinces. A local school committee was constituted for each of them to look after their affairs. Officially, they were referred to as 'District Primary Schools'. The Government would not allow them to go by its name as it then had no intention of establishing a school system of its own. The policy was that of directing and assisting deserving voluntary efforts in education.

But in that same year, the Director of Education strongly urged the Government to change the policy and also recommended that schools sponsored by it, particularly those already in existence, should be known as 'Government Schools'. He feared that unless this was done, local community support for such schools might be lost.<sup>70</sup> We should note that the initial Government

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<sup>69</sup>Ayandele, E.A. The Missionary Impact on Modern Nigeria, 1842-1914, op. cit. p. 303.

<sup>70</sup>Annual Report 1926, p. 7.

policy was not to open a school system of its own.

At this juncture, let us examine how the early 'District Primary Schools' came into existence in the first instance. This will enable us to understand the background to the Director's recommendation and fears. The procedure was as follows: if the Government decided to take the initiative of opening a school in a particular area, its local chiefs were invited to a meeting and asked if they wanted it. If they answered 'yes' as was almost always the case, they were further asked if they were prepared to donate a piece of land for the site and if they would bear half the annual costs of maintaining it. The proposal was dropped if these terms were not accepted by the people. In return for the contribution by the local community, its children were exempted from the payment of school fees while those from outside the district were not.<sup>71</sup> This was the background to the initial official insistence that such institutions should not be called 'Government Schools' and the Director's fear that local support might be lost if that was not done.

Following the establishment of the Education Department, the Government promulgated an Education Code for the Protectorate also in 1903. This was the first official document in respect of education in the territory. It outlined rules and regulations governing the conduct of primary and secondary schools and also prescribed the type of instruction to be given in them. Its other provisions were as follows:

- (i) English was to be the medium of instruction in all schools;
- (ii) Grants to Mission schools were to be made on the basis of average attendance and results of annual examinations; and
- (iii) Religious instruction to be optional in all schools.

The code also empowered Government Inspectors to inspect all assisted schools

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<sup>71</sup> Annual Report 1926, pp. 6-7, see also Phillipson's Report, pp. 12-13.

at any 'reasonable time' regardless of its religious affiliation. The policy document was in respect of schools on the assisted list only. It did not apply to the unassisted ones and it also made no provision on the procedure for the establishment of new schools. The result was that the Missions were free to open schools wherever they liked or were asked to do so by the local people.

The RCM accepted the code in its entirety especially the use of English as a medium of instruction. The CMS on the other hand, rejected it, describing it as an interference in Mission education by the Government. It would continue to use the vernacular as the medium of instruction in its schools because to teach in English would result in their products being unable to read the Bible in their own language. In addition, the Society argued that "it is perfectly obvious that education conducted in a foreign tongue amongst utterly illiterate people cannot be productive of any real permanent result".<sup>72</sup>

Although the above argument has its merit, the point was that the educational objective of the people themselves was not to learn to read the Bible in their own language. Parents sent their children to school to learn to read, write and speak English, which they saw as the gateway to the superior European culture. This was similar to what was happening in Kenya about the same time.<sup>73</sup> The RCM realized this and started early to teach English in its schools, and as a result, won more converts than any of its rivals.

On the issue of grants based on average attendance and annual examination results, the CMS preferred government subsidies on the basis of efficiency - the character of its children and the general tone of the school. It was also opposed to the policy of making religious instruction optional in schools. The Society argued that doing so would defeat the *raison d'être* of

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<sup>72</sup>Ekechi, F.K., *op. cit.* p. 191

<sup>73</sup>Cf. Anderson, John, The Struggle for the School; *op. cit.*, pp. 106-111.

its missionary work in Africa.

On the basis of its traditional attitude to the teaching of religion in schools, it is surprising that the RCM did not oppose the Government policy on it. We can only speculate on its reasons for this. (i) Earlier, the relationship between the Mission and the Government Agent, the Royal Niger Company, was highly strained.<sup>74</sup> It was possible that the Catholics were anxious for better relations with the new administration; (ii) It could also be that the Mission knew that the Government had no effective means of enforcing the policy and so, there was no need to oppose it; and (iii) Perhaps, the Catholics decided on its line of action because its main rival, the CMS was on the other side. It is possible that all three suggestions were responsible for the Catholic posture on the issue.

Whatever happened, the RCM scored a point over its rival, the CMS by accepting the Education Code of 1903. For instance, following the rejection, the relationship between the Anglicans and the Government deteriorated from year to year. By 1908, the two had almost come to blows and grants to CMS schools were withheld for that year for their not operating as laid down by Government regulations. On the other hand, the RCM was on very friendly terms with the Government and got all the grants for its schools, and as we saw earlier, its head in the Lower Niger Prefecture was appointed one of the first members of the Education Advisory Council for Southern Nigeria in 1906.

Following the advice of the Director in 1903, by 1905 "the policy of the Government of the Southern Protectorate was clearly to establish a Government-controlled educational system".<sup>75</sup> This policy was actively pursued between that date and 1911. This is shown by the rate at which new such schools were established. In the East for example, the number went up from one in 1903 to sixteen in 1909. For the whole of Southern Nigeria in

<sup>74</sup>For the relationship between the RCM and the Royal Niger Company, see Ekechi, F.K., *op. cit.*, pp. 93-113.

<sup>75</sup>Phillipson's Report, p. 13.

that year, there were 40 such schools as compared with only 5 in 1903. By 1911, 21 new ones had been opened in different parts of the Protectorate.<sup>76</sup> All of them came into existence and were maintained by the system described earlier.

With the amalgamation of the Colony and Protectorate of Lagos with the Protectorate of Southern Nigeria in 1906, a new Education Ordinance was introduced in 1908 for the whole of Southern Nigeria. At the same time, the territory was divided into Western, Central and Eastern Groups of Provinces which corresponded with the later Western, Mid-Western and Eastern Regions. Each of them had its own Provincial Board of Education charged with the responsibility of adapting the common code to local conditions and needs in its area of authority and to submit its recommendations to the Governor-in-Council for approval.<sup>77</sup>

In 1911, the average attendance in Government and assisted schools was given as 3,984 and 11,732 respectively. The following year, it was reported that there were a total of 90 mission schools in receipt of Government grants-in-aid throughout the Southern Protectorate. The distribution of their ownership was as follows: RCM - 36; CMS - 27; CSM - 19, Methodists - 6 and Others -2. At the same time, it was estimated that about 20,000 pupils attended other Mission schools which were in no way associated with the Government.<sup>78</sup> These were the unassisted schools more of which will be discussed later in this chapter and in the next one.

For a Mission school to become grant-aided, it had to apply formally after it had attained the standards laid down in the Education Code. Later, it was inspected by the officials of the Department who must be satisfied that the standards had actually be attained. After that, the school was recommended for inclusion on the assisted list.

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<sup>76</sup>Annual Report, 1926, p. 8.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., p.7.

<sup>78</sup>Phillipson's Report, p. 13; see also Annual Report 1926, p. 8.

Among the conditions to be fulfilled were that the school was not to be located close to another one already receiving grants from public funds. This provision was intended as a check on duplication of facilities which was one of the major criticisms of the partnership before state take-over of schools. The other conditions were that there must be proper buildings, adequate and efficient staff, good rendering of returns and that the school must not be operated for profit. This last point is important because in later years, many of the proprietors were said to be operating their institutions on profit at the expense of the general public and this was one of the abuses the nationalization exercise was intended to correct. We will come back to the criticisms of the partnership system when we discuss the actual take-over of schools by the state in Section Four of this study.

Under the Education Ordinance of 1908, on admission into the assisted list, a primary school received a first grant of 3s per unit of average attendance, a second grant calculated also at 3s per unit of average attendance was awarded for organisation and efficiency and a third grant of 3s for every individual pass in both the compulsory and optional subjects at annual examination. The Government also made grants to cover the full salaries of certificated teacher and part of those of the uncertificated ones, for buildings and their maintenance. Assistance to secondary schools was calculated on similar basis but at a more generous rate. For instance, they received 4s for individual passes in all subjects at the annual examination.<sup>79</sup>

A new Education Ordinance and Regulations were introduced for Government and the assisted schools in December, 1916. Under them, grants were no longer to be made partly on the basis of individual examination results. They were hence to be based on the general efficiency of a school as was

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<sup>79</sup>Phillipson's Report, pp. 13-14.

advocated by the CMS earlier in 1903. For the first time, the Missions were to receive grants for the training of teachers. Until that date, they had borne the cost from their own resources. Funds were also made available for the establishment of new Teacher Training Colleges or expansion of those already in existence.

To bring all schools under Government supervision, the Ordinance provided for the right of Inspectors to inspect any school and call for relevant information. It also laid down conditions under which a school could be closed on the order of the Governor, but, remained silent on the establishment of new ones and the control of those outside the assisted list.<sup>80</sup> Perhaps one may argue that it was too early for restrictions to have been placed on the opening of new schools. But if Government was concerned for the recognition of a school for grants-in-aid, there was no reason why steps should not have been taken at the same time to check the indiscriminate establishment of schools.

By 1917, the number of assisted schools in the Protectorate had gone up from 90 in 1912 to 167 while the number of Government schools went down from 61 in 1911 to 45. The two trends and the provisions of the new Ordinance indicate that as of that date, the policy was shifting from the establishment of 'a Government-controlled educational system' to greater financial assistance and regulation of a system largely controlled by the Missions in particular. In the same year, the number of registered unassisted Mission schools was given as 1,442. The following year, 22 more schools were brought into the assisted list bringing the number to 189. It was also reported that there had been an increase of 105.3 per cent in total school enrolment over the five-year period 1913-18. The figures for the two years were 35,756 and 73,393 respectively. The Government was worried over the rapid rate of increase in the number of schools and their enrolment.

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<sup>80</sup> Annual Report 1926, p.9.



It commented that in recent years and notwithstanding the difficulties created by the First World War, the Missions had "very largely increased the number of their schools" under pressure from local communities and rivalry to secure larger areas of influence.<sup>81</sup>

The problem was mainly with the unassisted schools which the Government had no means of controlling their expansion. In a Memorandum issued in 1918, they were described as:

"either Mission schools which do not desire to come on the Assisted List (complaining that the old code was too rigid and presented gratuitous difficulties to the teaching of religion),<sup>82</sup> or have failed to qualify or are private venture schools . . . "<sup>83</sup>

In the same Memorandum, Lord Lugard, the Governor of Nigeria (1914-18) summarized the policy of his Government on 'Church and State' in Education. He said:

"I regard it as an essential feature of a right policy in Education, that it should enlist in hearty co-operation all the educational agencies in the country which are conducted (as Mission Schools are) with the sole object of benefitting the people. Schools which conform to conditions laid down in the regulations will be 'assisted' to the extent provided therein by a grant from Revenue. 'Unassisted' schools are independent of Government control, but I hope that they will be induced to conform to the principles and policy laid down by Government, and supported and approved by the principal

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<sup>81</sup>Annual Report 1926, loc. cit.

<sup>82</sup>This was a reference to the stand taken by the CMS over the Education Code of 1903 and the attitude of the Methodist towards state participation in education referred to earlier.

<sup>83</sup>Government of Nigeria. 'Political Memorandum, 1918' quoted in Phillipson's Report, p. 16.

Educational agencies. Those which do so conform - and invite inspection - will naturally be justified in expecting a greater measure of encouragement from Government".<sup>84</sup>

The Governor further regretted that Government was not spending enough money on education. In 1916, only 1.6 per cent of the country's revenue was expended on education. For the next two years, it was 1.4 and 1.5 per cent respectively. In his opinion, even if the figures had been doubled, they would still not have been enough. He would therefore like to see the annual expenditure on education trebled.

During his period in office, the outstanding feature of Lord Lugard's educational policy "was the great importance which he attached to full co-operation with the Missions".<sup>85</sup> When the Governor expressed the hope that the unassisted schools would be induced to conform to Government principles and policies, he was referring mainly to the CMS and the Methodists who still objected to certain aspects of the educational policy of the Government. But in spite of this, the official attitude remained that of "full co-operation with the Missions".

Lord Lugard was succeeded by Sir High Clifford in 1919. The new Governor spent a great deal of his first three years in office on the problem of the rapid increase in the number of unassisted schools and without regard to the capacity of the economy to support them. For example, in 1922 the number of registered such schools had risen from 1,442 ten years earlier to 2,432 with an enrolment of 122,000 pupils. It was also believed that there were many others in remote villages not registered with the Education Department. Four years later (1926) there was a total of 3,578 unassisted schools in the Protectorate with an enrolment of 146,700 pupils. That was an increase of 47.1 and 20.2 per cent in number

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<sup>84</sup> Phillipson's Report, p. 17.

<sup>85</sup> Annual Report, 1949, p. 5.

and enrolment respectively over a four-year period. In that year, the Government lamented that "schools had multiplied so rapidly as to be beyond the effective supervision and control of many of the Agencies which had sponsored them in answer to local demands and utterly beyond the power of the Education Department ... to inspect or indeed supervise in any way".<sup>86</sup>

What we have done so far has been to show the state of general education in Southern Nigeria as a whole and the East in particular, when the Phelps-Stokes Fund in co-operation with the International Education Board published its first reports on education in West, South and Equatorial Africa in 1922.<sup>87</sup> Among their many findings only two are particularly relevant to this study. First, they blamed the problems of education in Africa on lack of proper organisation and supervision of the school system. The Missions and the Governments had failed to apply sound principles of administration in the education aspect of their work. Second, there was inadequate co-operation between the Missions and the Colonial Administration on educational matters, and the role assigned to the natives was grossly inadequate. The absence of effective organisation was attributed to lack of clear-cut objectives for education in Africa. As far as the Missions were concerned, education was merely an instrument for winning native converts.<sup>88</sup> These findings served to re-emphasize the problems of education in Southern Nigeria in general and the East in particular during the period under review.

A year after the first Phelps-Stokes Report was published, the British Government set up an Advisory Committee on Native Education in British Tropical Africa. Its main term of reference was to advise the Colonial Secretary on matters related to the progress of education in British Dependencies in Africa. On the basis of its recommendations, a Memorandum

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<sup>86</sup> Annual Report, 1926, p. 20.

<sup>87</sup> For more details of the Reports, see Lewis, L.J. (ed.), Phelps-Stokes Reports on Education in Africa (abridged with Introduction) Oxford University Press, 1962.

<sup>88</sup> ibid, pp. 107-134.

on 'Education in British Colonial Territories'<sup>89</sup> was issued in 1925. In it, twelve principles were outlined as a guide to the development of education in the Dependencies. Of that number, only five are considered directly related to this study and they were as summarized below:

- (i) Governments were to reserve to themselves the right to formulate and direct educational policies and to supervise all educational instruction through inspection and other means. At the same time, voluntary efforts were to be encouraged, and every Dependency was to set up Advisory Boards to co-ordinate the activities of all agencies concerned;
- (ii) In all schools, religious instruction was to be accorded a pride of place and regarded as fundamental to the development of sound education.
- (iii) Efficient 'Voluntary Agency' schools were to be accorded equal status with those directly run by Governments, and given grants-in-aid no longer on the basis of examination result.
- (iv) Visiting teachers were to be appointed and their duty was to make regular visits to village schools to inspire and encourage their teachers; and
- (v) Governments were to work out definite aims of education and pass them on to schools through mission inspectors who were to offer friendly advice and supervision to their own schools according to the system of inspection prescribed by the Government.

The above five directives are relevant for three main reasons (a) they were designed to bring education in the Dependencies more in line with practices in Great Britain; (b) they were also intended as a remedy to the defects pointed out by the Phelps-Stoke Report of 1922; and (c) for more than twenty years, they were the basis of educational policy in Nigeria as

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<sup>89</sup> See Memorandum on Educational Policy in British Tropical Africa, Cmd. 2374 HMSO, 1925.

will be shown presently.

Soon after the Memorandum was made public, an International Conference of the Protestant Christian Missions meeting at La Zoute in 1926 welcomed it and resolved that although the Missions recognised education as a government function,

"it should be left to a large extent in the hands of the Missions, aided by government subsidy and organised under government direction since African education would be of no value without religion".<sup>90</sup>

The significance of this resolution is that it remained the stand of the Protestant Missions in Eastern Nigeria, as will be shown later, up to the nationalization of schools. They would co-operate with the Government in any way provided they were allowed to take charge of religious instruction in the schools they founded.

It is also important to mention that before the Advisory Committee's Memorandum was issued, the Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford had submitted a report to the Colonial Secretary on the state of education in Nigeria. In it, he strongly recommended a check on the multiplication of unassisted schools and suggested that the Board of Education be empowered to regulate the opening of new schools and to close down any school found to be "inadequately equipped, housed and managed or in which the teachers are themselves too ignorant to be able to impart education of a really sound character". He also emphasised the point that "Government did not exercise supervision or control over the bulk of educational activities in the Southern Provinces". Only the Government and assisted schools were under effective control and "no supervision and control was exercised or exercisable over unassisted schools". Finally, the Governor proposed that elementary education in Southern Nigeria be entrusted exclusively in the

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<sup>90</sup> Hailey, William Malcolm, (Baron) An African Survey, Oxford University Press, London 1938, p. 1236.

hands of the Christian Missions.<sup>91</sup>

Commenting on the Governor's recommendations twenty-three years later, Phillipson in this 'Grants-in-Aid of Education in Nigeria' observed:

"It is clear from the foregoing that the author of the Memorandum was chiefly concerned to check further multiplication of ill-equipped and unsatisfactory schools and, in effect to bring order into a rather chaotic situation. It may well be that the Memorandum expressed rather exaggerated alarm at the unsatisfactory by-products of a process which was in certain respects a healthy and vigorous social phenomenon and which in any case was the inevitable resultant of the forces playing on the community at the time and, therefore not wholly susceptible to official control".<sup>92</sup>

In the case of Eastern Nigeria in particular, the forces referred to by Phillipson were the rivalry arising from the desire of the Missions to win more converts and to control more areas through the establishment of schools, and the impetus brought to bear on this by the people's natural desire to be always in the stream of progress as was represented at this time, by the acquisition of Western education and culture.

The Governor's recommendations also illustrate the desire of the Government to be given more powers to enable it to have more effective control of education in all its ramifications especially, on the issue of indiscriminate establishment of schools. The recommendation of handing over elementary education to the Missions marked the end of the earlier policy of establishing a Government-controlled system of primary education. In fact, by the time the proposal was made, eight more of the Government primary schools had already been handed over to different Christian Missions

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<sup>91</sup> Phillipson's Report, pp. 18-19.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., p. 18.

and five others closed down because there were other 'efficient' Mission schools located very close to them.<sup>93</sup>

The necessary legal powers for tackling the issues and problems raised by the three documents discussed above namely:

(a) the Phelps-Stokes Report;  
 (b) the Memorandum on "Education in British Colonial Territories";  
 and (c) the Governor's Memorandum to the Colonial Secretary were embodied in a new Education Code<sup>94</sup> issued in 1926. Its main provisions were as summarised below:

(i) Registration of Teachers:

A register was to be kept for all teachers and no person was to teach in any school in the Colony or Southern Provinces unless he had been registered or after his name had been deleted from the register or during any period of suspension.

(ii) Opening of New Schools:

Before a new school could open, the Proprietor must first notify the Director of Education in writing giving full details of the proposal. The Ordinance empowered the Governor to withhold approval for the opening of a school if the Director and the Board of Education were satisfied that it would not be properly conducted.

(iii) Closing of Schools:

If an inspection report revealed that a school was not being conducted in the best interests of the people or community, the proprietor was to be given three months within which to remedy the fault. If after that period it was discovered that the school was still being conducted in an unsatisfactory manner, the Governor was empowered to close it on the recommendation of the Director and the Board.

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<sup>93</sup>See Annual Report 1926, pp. 8-9 and 17-8.

<sup>94</sup>ibid, pp. 10-12; and see also Phillipson's Report, pp. 19-21.

(iv) Inspection of Schools:

The Director or his Officers or the Resident or his officers could enter and inspect any school at any time both assisted and unassisted.

(v) Supervision:

The Ordinance defined a "Supervisor" as "a person appointed by a Proprietor and approved by the Governor to assist in the supervision of schools established and conducted by such a Proprietor. He is not a Government agent nor does he act under the orders of the Director of Education. His object is to raise the standard of education and to improve the methods of teaching employed in the schools under his jurisdiction."<sup>95</sup>

(vi) Strengthening of the Board of Education:

Although the Ordinance of 1916 provided for a Board of Education, it rarely met and consequently proved ineffective. The provision for the Board in the new Ordinance was aimed at its reactivation. Its membership was enlarged and included the Director, his Deputy, the Assistant Director and 10 representatives of the Missions and other educational agencies. It was intended to be an effective liason between the Education Department and the Voluntary Agencies.

The Regulations under the Ordinance made an attempt "to escape finally from the practice of paying grants on the basis of examination results and average attendance."<sup>96</sup> Before that date, and under the Ordinance of 1916, Government Inspectors had to conduct examinations in all assisted schools "from time to time during the year" for the purpose of calculating the proportion of grants based on efficiency. The task was found to be onerous, partly because the Ordinance did not spell out in specific terms the criteria to be taken into account. The aim of the new Regulations was to

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<sup>95</sup> Annual Report 1926, pp. 10-11.

<sup>96</sup> Phillipson's Report, p. 20.



do away with it, by providing for efficiency to be measured in terms of teachers' qualifications and for the grants to be calculated on the basis of the total salary bill for the teachers.

The Missions welcomed the new Ordinance and pledged their full co-operation. As a means of checking duplication of educational facilities, they also accepted the Government directive that instead of the old practice of one school for each village, the Missions should merge a number of such schools in a given locality into one central one. A year after the new Ordinance came into force, 10 Mission Supervisors were appointed and approved by the Director. They were to help in carrying out the re-organisation of schools and the Government was to indemnify the Missions for their salaries and other expenses connected with their work.

The acceptance of the new Ordinance by the Missions and the appointment of their Supervisors are both to be seen as an important milestone in the evolution of the partnership arrangement between the Missions and the Government in education. Both events marked the crystallization of a nationally co-ordinated school system in which both major parties recognised each other as a partner.

In pursuit of its new policy of greater assistance to the educational work of the Missions, more schools were admitted into the assisted list and by 1927, the number in the Protectorate had gone up to 229 with an enrolment of 44,814 pupils. The figures for the East were 96 and 20,454 respectively, and their distribution among the Missions were as follows:

Table IX Assisted Mission Primary Schools in the Eastern Group of Provinces and their Ownership: 1927<sup>97</sup>

| Denomination | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| RCM          | 18             | 4,893     |
| CMS          | 24             | 4,884     |
| CSM          | 31             | 6,413     |
| Methodist    | 11             | 2,062     |
| Others       | 12             | 2,202     |
| Total        | 96             | 20,450    |

It is significant that as a result of the new measures adopted in the previous year, the number of registered unassisted schools dropped from 3,578 in 1926 to 2,519 by the end of 1927. That shows that as many as 1,058 or 29.6 per cent of the schools had disappeared as a result of the merger exercise or the closing of the inefficient ones by the Government. It is also significant that there was a similar reduction in enrolment. For example, it went down from 146,700 pupils in such schools in 1926 to 127,066. Neither the Government nor the Missions offered any explanation for the drop in enrolment. But under the circumstances, there were two main factors that could have accounted for it. In the first place, as a result of the merger exercise, some of the central schools might have been too far for young pupils to attend them. Secondly, some of the inefficient schools might have been closed down by the Government as was provided by the Ordinance and this could have resulted in drop in the overall enrolment.

Of the 2,519 unassisted schools, 1,536 or approximately 61 per cent were located in the East. They accounted for 83,662 or approximately 66 per cent of the total enrolment of such schools in the Protectorate. Their

<sup>97</sup>Calculated from Annual Report 1927, pp. 16-17.

ownership was distributed among the Missions as shown in the table below.

Table X Ownership of Unassisted Schools in the Eastern Group of Provinces, 1927<sup>98</sup>

| Denomination | No. of schools | Enrolment |
|--------------|----------------|-----------|
| RCM          | 408            | 30,225    |
| CMS          | 177            | 13,868    |
| CSM          | 73             | 3,478     |
| Methodist    | 309            | 10,453    |
| Others       | 569            | 25,598    |
| Total        | 1,536          | 83,622    |

The above figures clearly indicate that the number of schools and enrolment were much higher in the East than in the other parts of the Souther Protectorate. This was as a direct result of the intensive missionary rivalry and the social forces in the area discussed earlier. In fact, in 1928 it was reported that in addition to great pressure on the Missions by the people for more schools, many applications were received from different local communities requesting the Government to open schools for them. In the same year, the Director of Education expressed great concern over the intensity of the rivalry between the RCM and the CMS in Onitsha Province.<sup>99</sup>

By 1929, the Government was reported to have extended its powers of control and supervision to most areas of the school system. In that year for example, Professor Westerman, a language expert, was specially invited from England to study and make recommendations on the Southern Nigerian languages that could be used in writing vernacular text-books and as additional media of instruction in schools. He toured the territory between

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<sup>98</sup>Annual Report 1927, pp. 19-20.

<sup>99</sup>Annual Report 1928, p. 10.

March and April of that year and visited among other places, Calabar and Umuahia.

After considering Professor Westerman's report and recommendations later in the year, the Central Board of Education resolved as follows:

- (a) "That Professor Westerman's orthography be adopted;" and
- (b) "That this Board of Education approves the use of Union Ibo as the medium of text-books in Ibo and accepts the suggestion of Professor Westerman that the grammar be that of the Owerri dialect".

The Board also set up three Vernacular Advisory Committees for the translation of textbooks into Efik, Ibo and Yoruba.<sup>100</sup>

In addition, there was evidence that the provisions of the new Ordinance were being strictly enforced. For example, in that year too, it was reported that one school was struck off the assisted list and grants were withheld from five others in Calabar and Owerri Provinces "owing to their having done very bad work during the year". A number of teachers were also either suspended or removed from the register for professional misconduct. The Government also organised refresher course for teachers in the East at Afikpo, Ogoja, Onitsha and Umuahia.<sup>101</sup>

By that date too, every application for permission to open new schools was being thoroughly investigated by both the Officers of the Department of Education and the Administrative Officers in whose districts they were to be located. A number of such applications were "definitely refused" during the year, and the Government was satisfied that "the knowledge of the legal necessity for prior permission has prevented the opening of vast numbers of totally useless and possibly harmful institutions". The Eastern Group of Provinces was described as an area where "control is by no means such an easy matter ... particularly in the Owerri and Calabar Provinces" where

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<sup>100</sup>Annual Report 1929, p. 42.

<sup>101</sup>ibid., p. 43.

660, and 935 unassisted schools existed respectively.<sup>102</sup>

By 1929 too, the number of assisted schools in the East had gone up from 96 in 1927 to 122. Their distribution among the four administrative Provinces is of special interest. It was as shown in the table below:

Table XI Assisted Primary schools in the East by Province and Ownership:1929<sup>103</sup>

| Denomination | Calabar      |           | Ogoja        |           | Onitsha      |           | Owerri       |           | Total No. of Schs. | Total Enrolment |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------|
|              | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment |                    |                 |
| RCM          | 4            | 1,277     | 1            | 84        | 14           | 4,152     | 7            | 2,252     | 26                 | 7765            |
| CMS          | 1            | 189       | -            | -         | 13           | 3,417     | 15           | 2,568     | 29                 | 6174            |
| CSM          | 24           | 5,925     | 2            | 198       | -            | -         | 7            | 990       | 33                 | 7113            |
| Methodist    | 11           | 2,058     | -            | -         | 1            | 42        | 8            | 1,552     | 20                 | 3622            |
| Others       | 9            | 1,973     | -            | -         | -            | -         | 5            | 982       | 14                 | 2955            |
| Grand Total  | 49           | 11,422    | 3            | 282       | 28           | 7,611     | 42           | 8,314     | 122                | 27629           |

It is interesting to note from the above table that although the RCM had not the single highest number of assisted schools in 1929, it was the only one that operated in all the Provinces, and that inspite of their disagreement on delimitation, none of the Protestant Missions had schools in all the Provinces. It is also worthy of note that Ogoja Province had only 3 assisted schools as compared with Calabar - 49; Owerri - 42 and Onitsha - 28. This is a further evidence of the point made earlier that the area has always been the least developed in Eastern Nigeria. As for the whole of the Southern Protectorate, the number of such schools was 267 showing an increase by 38 or 16.6 per cent over the two-year period. There was similar increase in enrolment from 44,814 to 53,960 pupils.

<sup>102</sup>Annual Report, 1929, loc. cit.

<sup>103</sup>Calculated from ibid (Appendix V) pp. 61-2.

The figures for the unassisted schools reflect trends similar to those of the assisted ones and that the East continued to lead the rest of the Southern Protectorate in number and enrolment till the end of the period under review. The figures were as shown in Table XII below:

Table XII Unassisted Primary Schools in the East by Province and Ownership: 1929<sup>104</sup>

| Denomination | Calabar      |           | Ogoja        |           | Onitsha      |           | Owerri       |           | Total No. of schs. | Total Enrolment |
|--------------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------|
|              | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment | No. of schs. | Enrolment |                    |                 |
| RCM          | 83           | 8,282     | 16           | 545       | 143          | 7,362     | 133          | 10,877    | 375                | 27,066          |
| CMS          | 2            | 416       | -            | -         | 196          | 6,787     | 239          | 11,017    | 437                | 18,220          |
| CSM          | 39           | 1,939     | 19           | 938       | -            | -         | 23           | 944       | 81                 | 3,821           |
| Methodist    | 154          | 5,069     | -            | -         | 20           | 614       | 122          | 3,920     | 296                | 9,603           |
| Others       | 305          | 19,734    | -            | -         | 1            | 35        | 79           | 3,687     | 385                | 23,456          |
| Grand Total  | 538          | 35,440    | 35           | 1,483     | 360          | 14,798    | 596          | 30,445    | 1574               | 82,166          |

The total number of unassisted schools in Southern Nigeria was 2,216 with an enrolment of 114,897 pupils. The above table shows that the East had 71 and 71.5 per cent of the two figures respectively. Another relevant point is the continued downward trend in the number of such schools from 2,519 two years earlier to 2,216 showing an overall decrease by 12 per cent. This meant in effect that the enforcement of the Regulations of the 1926 Ordinance were achieving their intended objectives. But in the East on the other hand, the number had rather gone up by approximately 2.5 per cent from 1,536 to 1,574.

<sup>104</sup> Calculated from Annual Report, 1929 (Appendix VII) pp. 64-5.

### Summary

So far, we have tried to show that by 1929, the Government had expanded and consolidated its participation in education to include greater financial assistance through increase in the number of assisted mission schools, supervision and control of education in general and the establishment of new schools in particular. But inspite of the Government's stricter measures and their positive results, the East on account of its peculiar circumstances, continued to pose special problems in matters related to educational control.

This sub-section as a whole has shown that 1901-29 was a period of intensive missionary activities in Eastern Nigeria. The British conquest of its interior parts, the building of motor roads and railway lines, the desire of the Missions to carve out areas of influence for themselves, the people's spirit of rivalry as a way of life then transferred to the acquisition of Western education and culture and the absence of an established religion capable of presenting the kind of obstacle which Islam had constituted to the spread of Christianity in the West of Nigeria or the North, all combined to create a favourable atmosphere for the establishment of schools, the vehicle of evangelism, in almost every village. The result was that more schools than the Missions could control or the Government could supervise were opened.

The period also marked the beginning of active Government participation in education. At first, it would not establish a school system of its own. Later, this policy was abandoned in favour of establishing a State controlled school system in co-operation with local communities. By the end of the review period, the policy had again shifted to that of more active support, control and supervision of a system largely dominated by the Missions. Its most effective instrument of control was the system of grants-in-aid to 'efficient' schools. The other was the power to refuse the opening of new schools or to close those found to be inefficient. The absence of this

provision before 1926 made it difficult for the Government to exercise effective control over educational expansion before that date. But following its introduction, there was significant reduction in the growth of unassisted schools.

By the end of the period too, the Government had clearly recognised and accepted education as a state function. Its policy was to provide it in active co-operation with the Missions who were in the field before it, and the local communities who desired education. Government functions took the form of financial assistance to deserving schools, making laws and regulations and prescribing standards. Its officials supervised and inspected all schools to ensure that:

- (i) Government grants were being used for the purpose for which they were made, and
- (ii) schools operated strictly according to the regulations prescribed in the code.

But all that notwithstanding, the role of the Government at this time was largely in response to events in the field of educational development. Even the schools it sponsored had to be desired and partly paid for by the local communities served. In the case of its relationship with the Missions, the role of the Government was more or less that of a policeman - keeping law and order in the system and doing what it could to help. It went into the business of education not on its own but to help the Missions and the local communities who were already carrying it on all from their own resources. Initially, the Government did not see the education of the masses as a part of its responsibility. But gradually, this view was changed to that of active involvement and acceptance of education as one of its functions as will be shown in the next chapter.

During the period under view, the administration of mission schools was highly fragmented and the Government was the only central link connecting all the agencies in the education enterprise. We shall however, treat this



topic more fully in the next chapter. But here, suffice it to bear in mind that the Government had as early as 1913 expressed concern over this problem and made a proposal for its remedy. The proposal was at first rejected by the Missions but later, they accepted it in part through the appointment of their own Supervisors in 1927 to co-ordinate the educational activities of each denomination.

The other important issues in relation to the Missions are the extent to which the schools sponsored by them could actually be regarded as belonging to them, and how the unassisted schools were financed. The question here is whether both categories of schools actually belonged to the Missions or to the local communities judging from who really financed them. This is important in view of the later arguments over their real ownership. Both topics are examined under the sources of financing mission schools in the next chapter.

Finally, the absence of effective Government participation earlier than 1926 resulted in the opening of a large number of schools either under pressure by the local people or as a part of the race for expanding the missionary sphere of influence at the expense of their rivals. It was difficult to check this freelance practice until after the enactment of the Education Ordinance of 1926. The next chapter will continue along similar lines as this for the period, 1930-1950.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONTINUED EXPANSION; CONSOLIDATION; AND THE POLICY OF PARTNERSHIP: 1930-1950

#### Introduction:

As we saw in the last chapter, the four main Missionary Societies arrived in the Eastern parts of Nigeria between 1847 and 1894. Until early in this century, their activities were confined mainly to the coastal towns and villages. But with the establishment of law and order and the opening up of motor roads and railway lines in the hinterland, their work was extended to cover almost every village and hamlet by the end of the third decade of this century. By that date too, the Government had become actively involved in the control and financing of education.

The purpose of this chapter is to complete the general picture of the state of affairs and the policies pursued up to 1950 about what time the Imperial Government ceased to be completely in-charge. This is done under four main headings viz:

- (i) the accelerated rate of educational expansion and some of the factors that influenced it;
- (ii) the system of management and financing of the Mission schools;
- (iii) the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the Colonial Government; and
- (iv) the educational activities and policies of the Government prior to the era of self-determination and independence.

Finally, the chapter ends with a summary of what has been attempted in this section of the study.

#### 4.1 Increased Rate of Expansion and the Factors that Influenced It:

One of the ironies in the history of Nigerian education was, "that a period of great expansion coincided with one of acute financial stringency; (the economic depression of the 1930's followed by the outbreak of World War II). Indeed, the demand for education greatly outstripped the funds available to meet that demand. Insistent pressure from below created a confused situation of uncontrolled expansion".<sup>1</sup>

The effects of the economic depression became obvious in Nigeria about 1933. It was then that the prices of palm oil and kernel and other local commodities for export fell. Money was generally short, unemployment was on the increase and the prices of imported goods had risen sharply. The salaries of all employed persons including teachers who were in the majority, were reduced. But inspite of this, all such people were still better off than their self employed counterparts.

In the above circumstance, the people of Eastern Nigeria especially the Ibos, quickly realized that there was nothing better than salaried employment. It was seen as a kind of insurance against economic uncertainty. Before then, education was valued mainly as the secret of the whiteman's superior intelligence and as a passport into his culture. The depression served to emphasise more on its utilitarian dimension. To be educated and to be employed meant regular income in all kinds of economic weather.

Summing up the above experience, Mazi Mbonu Ojike, a pioneer Nigerian Nationalist observed:

"It was then that I began to look at education as a commodity that does not fall in price".

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<sup>1</sup>Memorandum on Education Policy in Nigeria, Government Printer, Lagos, 1947, p. 4.

All through the land, there was a noticeable change of attitude among many parents. Those whose children were not already in school, raised money to do so because to be like the whiteman and to be in a salaried job, "one has to be educated."<sup>2</sup>

The effects of the depression and the war that succeeded it, and the reaction of the people to the situation both had given rise to, were made visible in greater demand for education, increase in the number of schools, and explosion of enrolment at both primary and secondary levels as are illustrated in Table XIII below and the pages following:

Table XIII Assisted and Unassisted Primary Schools and Enrolment in Southern Nigeria 1929 and 1936<sup>3</sup>

| Year | Eastern Group of Provinces |             |           |             | The Entire Southern Protectorate |             |           |             |
|------|----------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------------|
|      | No. of schools             |             | Enrolment |             | No. of schools                   |             | Enrolment |             |
|      | Assisted                   | Un-assisted | Assisted  | Un-assisted | Assisted                         | Un-assisted | Assisted  | Un-assisted |
| 1929 | 122                        | 1,574       | 27,629    | 82,166      | 267                              | 2,216       | 53,960    | 114,897     |
| 1936 | 143                        | 1,826       | 35,421    | 95,494      | 316                              | 2,710       | 67,607    | 139,276     |

The above figures show that in 1936, the East had 45.3 per cent of the assisted schools and 52.3 per cent of their enrolment. In other words, there were more children in these schools in the East than the other parts of the Protectorate put together. The problem of rapid expansion however, was not so much with the assisted schools which were strictly under Government control and supervision. It was more with the unassisted ones which operated largely on their own, and it was with them too that the above trends were more obvious. As the above table also shows, during the seven-year period

<sup>2</sup>Ojike, M. My Africa, The John Day Company, New York, 1946, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup>Calculated from Annual Report 1936, Appendix XIII, pp. 77-8.

(1929-36), their number in the East increased from 1,574 with an enrolment of 82,166 to 1,826 with an enrolment of 95,494 pupils. For the whole of the Southern Protectorate in 1936 too, there was a total of 2,710 unassisted schools with an enrolment of 139,276 pupils in Southern Nigeria. In all, there were 3,026 primary schools (assisted and unassisted) with an enrolment of 206,883 pupils. Of the two figures, the East had 1969 or 65.1 per cent and 131,015 or 63.3 per cent respectively, and these figures leave one in no doubt as to the greater educational activities in area compared with the other parts. The ownership and the distribution of the two groups of schools in the East were as shown in Tables XIX and XV below:

Table XIV Assisted Primary Schools: ownership and distribution by Province, Eastern Nigeria, 1936<sup>4</sup>

| Denomination | Calabar      |        | Ogoja        |        | Onitsha      |        | Owerri       |        | Total        | Total  |
|--------------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|--------------|--------|
|              | No. of schs. | Enrol. | No. of schs. | Enrol. | No. of schs. | Enrol. | No. of schs. | Enrol. | No. of schs. | Enrol. |
| RCM          | 7            | 1,780  | 1            | 187    | 19           | 6,155  | 11           | 4,248  | 38           | 12,370 |
| CMS          | 1            | 218    | -            | -      | 14           | 4,229  | 22           | 5,093  | 37           | 9,610  |
| CSM          | 24           | 5,772  | 1            | 229    | -            | -      | 6            | 803    | 31           | 6,804  |
| Methodist    | 12           | 1,709  | -            | -      | 1            | 132    | 9            | 1,457  | 22           | 3,296  |
| Others       | 10           | 2,402  | -            | -      | -            | -      | 5            | 939    | 15           | 3,341  |
| Grand total  | 54           | 11,879 | 2            | 416    | 34           | 10,586 | 53           | 12,540 | 143          | 35,421 |

<sup>4</sup>Calculated from ibid., loc. cit.

Table XV Unassisted Primary Schools: Ownership and Distribution by  
Province, Eastern Nigeria, 1936<sup>5</sup>

| Denomination | Calabar        |        | Ogoja          |        | Onitsha        |        | Owerri         |        | Total          | Total  |
|--------------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|----------------|--------|
|              | No.of<br>schs. | Enrol. | No.of<br>schs. | Enrol. | No.of<br>schs. | Enrol. | No.of<br>schs. | Enrol. | No.of<br>schs. | Enrol. |
| RCM          | 113            | 7,407  | 30             | 1,410  | 218            | 10,923 | 237            | 17,696 | 598            | 37,436 |
| CMS          | 10             | 788    | -              | -      | 190            | 7,224  | 383            | 16,327 | 583            | 24,339 |
| CSM          | 32             | 1,877  | 32             | 1,393  | -              | -      | 7              | 274    | 71             | 3,544  |
| Methodist    | 76             | 4,203  | 9              | 146    | 11             | 220    | 65             | 2,479  | 161            | 7,048  |
| Others       | 307            | 17,763 | 11             | 425    | 4              | 329    | 91             | 4,610  | 413            | 23,127 |
| Grand Totals | 538            | 32,038 | 82             | 3,374  | 423            | 18,696 | 783            | 41,386 | 1826           | 95,594 |

In relation to the figures for the unassisted schools, the Annual Report 1936 pointed out that they were not strictly reliable. They reflected the number that the Voluntary Agencies had bothered to register with the Education Department. It was believed that there were more unregistered such schools in remote villages unknown to the Government officials. The case of the Methodist Missionary Society, Eastern Districts, was used to illustrate this point. According to the Education Department records, the Mission was known to be in possession of 183 assisted and registered unassisted primary schools with an enrolment of 10,344 pupils. But on inspection of the Society's private records, it was discovered that the actual number was 270 with an enrolment of 13,249 pupils.<sup>6</sup> This meant in effect that it had 87 other schools with an enrolment of 2,904 unknown to the Government. It was also pointed out that the practice was not confined to the Methodists only. The other Missions were also guilty of the same offence. The same 'Report' complained that in the Eastern Provinces in particular, "unnecessary competition between

<sup>5</sup>Calculated from ibid., Appendix XVII pp. 81-2.

<sup>6</sup>ibid., p. 56.

the Missions was still resulting in the opening of three or more inefficient schools in a small area".<sup>7</sup>

Commenting on the education scene during the 1930's and 40's some years later, the Government described the period as one of "uncontrolled expansion of Missions Schools ... which, in view of the diminishing resources of the Missions, was only possible at the sacrifice of standards and efficiency and which left both the Missions and their teachers in an unfortunate position financially".<sup>8</sup> Even Government grants to the Missions, as on other items of public expenditure had had to be reduced as a result of the economic situation. For example, in 1933, the original provision of £301,597 in the Estimates for education was later reduced to £284,025.<sup>9</sup> On their part, the Missions complained that it has "become increasingly difficult to collect fees", and that they were sending away many pupils who were unable to pay.<sup>10</sup> As the Government itself was not in a position to help much further, it appealed the Native Administrations to give greater financial assistance to the Missions operating in their areas of authority to help them keep their schools going. This appeal was said to have been favourably responded to in the East for in that year, a sum of £8,417<sup>11</sup> was made available to the Missions from this source. The contributions on provincial basis were as follows:

|         |     |     |     |        |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Calabar | ... | ... | ... | £3,041 |
| Ogoja   | ... | ... | ... | £1,989 |
| Onitsha | ... | ... | ... | £930   |
| Owerri  | ... | ... | ... | £2,457 |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |        |
| Total   | ... | ... | ... | £8,417 |
| <hr/>   |     |     |     |        |

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, loc. cit.

<sup>8</sup> Annual Report, 1949, p. 7.

<sup>9</sup> Annual Report, 1933, p. 11.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, p. 10.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid*, p. 13.

Although the self-employed was very badly affected as a result of the economic depression and comparatively worse off than most groups of those people in salaried jobs, on the other hand, the teachers were the worst hit of all those in salaried employments. For instance, a few years after the economic situation had further deteriorated, the Missions, in response to pressures for new schools, and to keep the old ones going particularly, in the poorer areas, adopted such drastic measures as reducing teachers' salaries, withholding their increments and imposing levies on them. It was as a result of such measures that the CSM teachers in Calabar Province went on strike in March, 1936. The Government intervened through its Superintendent of Education there, Mr. Beauchamp and got the teachers to call off the strike.<sup>12</sup> In some other cases, the more qualified and experienced teachers responded by leaving the profession for other less affected jobs and in a few cases, some such teachers were "dismissed as their salaries could not be met."<sup>13</sup> The exodus reached its peak about the end of the 1930's when the Government stepped in to halt it by making an additional grant of £133,000 to the Missions to enable them to pay comparable salaries to their certificated teachers.<sup>14</sup>

On Government policy itself, the economic difficulties of the period had the effect of accelerating the transfer of Government primary schools to other educational agencies. The then Director of Education, Mr. E.R. Hussey argued that it was costing the State about £1,000 per annum to maintain each of the schools, and that this amount was enough to place twenty Mission schools on sound financial position. The following statistics on the relative costs per capita<sup>15</sup> was advanced to support the argument:

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<sup>12</sup>For detailed account of the strike and how it was settled, see Annual Report 1936, p. 13.

<sup>13</sup>Annual Report, 1940, p. 1.

<sup>14</sup>Annual Report, 1949, p. 7.

<sup>15</sup>Annual Report, 1945, p. 7.



|                            | £ | s. | d.          |
|----------------------------|---|----|-------------|
| Government Primary Schools | 3 | 15 | 0 per annum |
| Mission (assisted)         | 1 | 15 | 0 per annum |
| Native Authority           | 1 | 12 | 0 per annum |

Between 1930 and 1938 therefore, twenty Government Primary schools were further handed over mainly to different Missions and a few to Native Administrations.<sup>16</sup> Thus, it was partly for economic reasons that the Colonial Government abandoned the original policy of establishing a state controlled primary school system. This point is important because the domination of education by the Missions in the East was largely responsible for the bitter conflicts of the later years as will be shown in the next section.

At the secondary school level, the rate of expansion was similar. For instance, its student population rose from 672 in 1929 to 4,672 in 1939.<sup>17</sup> Five years earlier (1934) the RCM had opened its first secondary grammar school in the East, the "Christ the King College", Onitsha<sup>18</sup> and five others within the next decade. By 1946, the number of registered mission secondary schools in the East had risen from 5 in 1929 to 16.<sup>19</sup> Their ownership was distributed as follows:

|           |     |     |    |
|-----------|-----|-----|----|
| RCM       | ... | ... | 6  |
| CMS       | ... | ... | 4  |
| CSM       | ... | ... | 2  |
| Methodist | ... | ... | 2  |
| Others    | ... | ... | 2  |
| Total     |     |     | 16 |

Of that number, only 5 were on the assisted list.

<sup>16</sup>Phillipson's Report, p. 24.

<sup>17</sup>Annual Report, 1949, loc. cit.

<sup>18</sup>Annual Report, 1936, p. 2.

<sup>19</sup>Phillipson's Report Appendix K, p. 112; see also Annual Report, 1949/50;p.64.

Inspite of the increase, by the end of the period under review, the available facilities were far short of the demand for secondary education. For instance, in 1949, more than 2,000 candidates competed for 30 places in Class 1 at the Government College, Umuahia.<sup>20</sup> In recognition of the problem at this level of education, the Government in that same year, appointed a Committee to investigate and make recommendations on how opportunities for secondary education could be increased in the East. It recommended that 33 new double-stream such schools should be opened in the Region by 1955.

In its comments on the Report, the Government accepted the target as desirable but, pointed out that it would be difficult to attain under the prevailing circumstances. In the first place, it was not in a position to finance either their capital or recurrent costs. Secondly, it would not be easy to find enough graduate staff either locally or from abroad to run them. Finally, neither the Missions nor the Local Government bodies and communities would have adequate resources for their efficient management.<sup>21</sup> It was not, therefore, feasible to embark on such elaborate expansion programme by any of the agencies in education. We should take note of this cautious approach to the issue by the Colonial Government so as to be able to compare it with what happened after 1950.

To meet the demand, local communities and private individuals siezed the initiative and embarked on the establishment of private-venture secondary institutions. For example, in Onitsha alone, 15 of the 19 secondary schools there in 1950 were of this type. In addition, numerous applications were made to the Deputy Director at Enugu for permission to open such schools. They came mainly from town and village Improvement Unions.<sup>22</sup> This was again a reflection of the people's spirit of rivalry and the desire to be always

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<sup>20</sup>ibid, loc. cit.

<sup>21</sup>ibid, loc. cit.

<sup>22</sup>ibid, loc. cit.

in the stream of progress as a way of life as we saw earlier in Chapter Two. Some of the applications, however, were made by private individuals with doubtful educational motive.

All through the period and inspite of all the powers conferred on it by the Education Ordinance of 1926 and the subsequent ones, the Government was unable to check effectively, the accelerated rate of expansion particularly, at the primary level. In 1946 for example, the number of such schools had gone up from 1,969 in 1936 to 2,819,<sup>23</sup> and four years later, it had nearly doubled to 5,136.

In 1950, there was a total of 9,864 primary institutions in the whole of Nigeria and their distribution among the then three Regions of the country was as shown in Table XVI below:

Table XVI Primary School Distribution among the Regions of Nigeria: 1950<sup>24</sup>

| Region   | No. of Schools | % of the total |
|----------|----------------|----------------|
| Eastern  | 5,136          | 52.1           |
| Western  | 3,272          | 33.2           |
| Northern | 1,456          | 14.7           |
| Total    | 9,864          | 100            |

The essence of the above figures is to show that the rate of educational development, particularly at the primary level, was greater in the East than not only in the other parts of Southern Nigeria, but the vast North included. The reasons for this are to be found in the background to the East discussed earlier in Chapter Two. In spite of Government restrictive measures, the Missions had continued to open more and more schools all through the period under review. In 1946 for example, it was reported that the central and feeder school system introduced in 1927 was

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<sup>23</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>24</sup> ibid., p. 34.

being "generally only carried out in a half-hearted way and the obstacles are the fear of losing ground locally to intruder agencies and the strength of parochialism".<sup>25</sup> Thus, the rivalry of the earlier years had continued through into the 1940's.

By 1950, the RCM was confirmed as the leader in the race for supremacy through education. By that date, the Mission controlled half of the primary schools in the East. The years immediately after the World War II witnessed a faster rate of Catholic expansion in the establishment of new schools than its Protestant rivals, which had suffered a major cut in European personnel able to go out to join them in Nigeria. Many English Protestants who might have gone abroad as missionaries were compelled to stay back in England to meet the increased demand for teachers brought about by the Education Act of 1944, and the anticipated 'child boom' following the end of the war. The Irish Catholics, who dominated the Mission in the East, had no such restriction. They poured in as missionaries soon after the war, and because they had no families to support, a reasonable part of their grant-in-aid salaries was ploughed back into the establishment of new schools and other educational activities by the Catholic Mission in the Region.

At that time, the RCM was behind the Protestants in Western Region and in the East, the Protestant Missions together were ahead of it in the ownership of secondary schools. But with the Catholic post-war advantage in personnel and finance, every effort was made not only to catch up with the Protestants but also, to surpass them. In this direction, Catholic schools were established in previously neglected areas and in predominantly Protestant areas. It was during this period that the RCM reached Item, the home town of the author and opened its first primary school there. Before

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<sup>25</sup> ibid., p. 57.

then, almost every Christian from the town was a Protestant. By the mid-1950's, the balance had so much tilted in favour of the Catholics that in addition to 50 per cent of the primary schools they also controlled a third of the secondary schools.<sup>26</sup>

In conclusion therefore, 1930-50 was a period of increased tempo in the establishment of schools. At first sight, this sounds ironical in view of the economic difficulties of the period created by the depression and the World War which followed soon after. But on the contrary, the effects of the two events which logically ought to have slowed down the rate of expansion, created a situation which led to greater demand for education. The old missionary rivalry came in to reinforce that demand and the result was an unprecedented rate of expansion. By the end of the period, the East had more than half the primary schools in the whole of Nigeria. At the secondary level, the demand far exceeded the supply, and private initiative stepped in to take advantage of Government inability to expand facilities. With the advantages conferred on it by the presence of its many Irish Priests after the War, the RCM caught up and surpassed its Protestant rivals in the ownership of schools.

The Government policy of regulating and controlling education within the limits of available resources proved ineffective. With all the powers conferred on it by the Ordinance of 1926, it could not restrain the Missions and the people from indiscriminate establishment of schools. Thus and as Phillipson commented, the great demand for education and the rate at which schools multiplied particularly in the East, were the by-products of a social phenomenon which

"was the inevitable resultant of the forces playing on the community at the time and, therefore not wholly susceptible to official control."<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup>See Abernethy, D.B.; op. cit. pp. 102-3; and Eastern Region, Education Department, Annual Reports, 1956, Table 1 p. 28, and 1960, Chart 9.

<sup>27</sup>Phillipson's Report, p. 18.

Finally, the economic difficulties accelerated the transfer of Government schools over to other educational agencies particularly, the Missions, and by 1950, only 17<sup>28</sup> of such schools were in existence in the Eastern Region as compared with well over 5,000 by the Voluntary Agencies.

#### 4.2 The System of Administration and Sources of Financing Mission Schools<sup>29</sup>

##### 4.2.1 General Administrative Set-up:

The system of administration and sources of financing the mission schools described below was adopted soon after the societies extended their educational activities into the interior following the opening up of the hinterland. In matters of details, the actual arrangement might vary from one Mission to another, but in general outline, the set-up was very much similar in each case. Although by the time the school system was nationalized the original arrangement had undergone some changes and re-organisations, all the same its essential features subsisted and remained in force through to the end. (see Appendix 8 and Chapter 9.1 (iii)(c)).

Each of the Missions divided its areas of operation into educational Parishes, Circuits or Districts with a Reverend Father, or Pastor or an experienced schoolmaster in-charge of each unit as its manager. He had as few as five or as many as sixty or more schools under his management. He was responsible for their administration, supervision and also acted as the

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<sup>28</sup>Annual Report 1949/50; p. 57.

<sup>29</sup>This section of the study is partly based on information gathered from interviews with former Education Secretaries of the four Missions. The author asked them the same questions on the system of administration and sources of financing their schools, and their answers were later compiled. Those interviewed with dates were as follows: Rev. S.K. Okpo (Methodist) 18.11.75; Mr. R.I. Uzoma (CMS) 28.11.75; Archbishop (Dr.) Francis Arinze (RCM) 6.12.75 and Rev. N. Eme (CSM) 16.12.75.

liaison between the schools and the Mission Headquarters which dealt on their behalf with the Government. At the village or town level, the manager was generally assisted by a local committee whose membership was drawn from the immediate locality of the school concerned. At the Parish, Circuit or District level, there was another committee made up of representatives of all the associating local committees and its chairman was the manager. The Committees at the two levels were particularly useful in matters related to raising funds for the support of the schools and in the acquisition of sites for new ones or for the expansion of those already in existence. They also served as a medium of communication between the Missions and the local communities.

Parallel to the District Managers was a team of Supervisors of Schools and Travelling or Visiting Teachers for each Mission. As we saw in Chapter Three, their appointment was approved by the Government which also made special grants for their salaries and other expenses. In principle, this category of Mission Officials were not assigned with any administrative duties but generally went round to schools to help promote the standard of efficiency and to inspire the teachers. But in practice, particularly with the Methodist Mission, the Supervisors also acted as the Circuit Managers.<sup>30</sup>

Above the District Manager and his Committee in the direct chain of command, was the Mission's Central Education Committee made up of representatives from all the Parishes, Circuits or Districts as the case might be. In practice, the Committee was an arm of the highest authority in each denomination, for instance, the Annual Synod in the case of the Methodist Mission. (see *infra*, p.226-7). The Central Education Committee exercised varying degrees of control over the activities of the component districts.

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<sup>30</sup>Interview with Mr. J.N. Igwe, former Methodist Supervisor of Schools (1950-65) conducted at Umuahia, on 9th December, 1975.

It also performed general administrative and supervisory functions over the Mission's secondary institutions through its executive head, the Education Secretary or the General Manager of Schools as he was designated in different denominations. He co-ordinated all the educational efforts of his Mission and represented it in matters between it, as a unit, and the Government. He also employed and dismissed teachers for all his Mission primary schools in his Diocese. Each secondary school had a management committee of its own presided over by its principal who also acted as its manager - employing and dismissing its teachers and looking after its day to day affairs in consultation with the Education Secretary or General Manager of the Diocese in which it is located.

In later years and as will be shown later in this Chapter (see *infra*, p. 253), the Government sponsored and made special grants for the appointment of two Education Advisers, one for the Protestants and the other for the Catholics. They were charged with the responsibility of co-ordinating the educational activities of each of the two religious camps on a national basis. They also spoke for the two bodies and represented them in all discussions and dealings with the Government at the national level. They were responsible to the National Advisory Council on Education of the respective bodies they represented. In general outline, this was the common pattern that ran through the four Missions in the administration of their schools. We shall next examine specific examples particularly in relation to sources of finance as was illustrated by the case of the Methodist Mission for the Protestants, and the Roman Catholic Mission as a unit.

#### 4.2.2. Sources of Finance:

##### A. The Protestant Missions:

The assisted schools derived the bulk of their revenue from Government grants and contributions by the local communities served either in form of fees or special levy on the people or both. But before a school qualified



for assistance from public funds, it must have existed for several years during which time it was expected to attain the Government prescribed standards. Because this group of schools were in minority and had regular income from grants, we are concerned particularly with the large majority of the unassisted ones which depended entirely for their income on the often irregular local contributions, fees, and donations from Philanthropic Organisations overseas.

As indicated earlier, the actual working of the system and its administrative set-up in the case of the Protestant Missions as a unit, is illustrated with the example of the Ikot-Ekpene District of the Methodists in Calabar Province as it was described in 1948 by the Mission's General Manager of Schools, Rev. W.T. Smith. In that year for example, the District had a total of 133 schools of which only 3 were on the assisted list.<sup>31</sup> Majority of the remaining 130 were Infant and Standard IV Group Schools<sup>32</sup> each of which was expected to be financially self-supporting. They derived their revenue from village Church funds and contributions from the communities served. Each school had 'a committee of ways and means' whose main functions were to determine the financial needs of the school for each year and to devise ways and means of finding the money. Each committee consisted of about 30 to 40 members drawn from among the Church leaders, the Chiefs and influential members of the local community. The Circuit Minister or his nominee acted as the Chairman while the school headmaster was the Secretary.

In some cases, the Chiefs and their people gave a 'palm bush' to be harvested for a season to raise the needed amount or part of it. In others, they levied every able bodied adult in the community and paid cash directly.

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<sup>31</sup>See the Memorandum on the "Work of the Methodist Mission in Ekot-Ekpene Division" by Rev. W.T. Smith in Phillipson's Report, pp. 126-8.

<sup>32</sup>These were Standard IV Schools which served as feeders to Central Standard VI Schools for a number of neighbouring towns and villages. As we saw in Chapter Three, the system was introduced first in 1927.

Occasionally, the Native Administration made small grants to the schools. It is important to mention that at this time, school fees were generally at nominal rates and so, did not provide substantial revenue for education. The Mission itself, gave no financial assistance to the Schools "from any central funds and if the people cease to support their staff, we should close the school and transfer the staff".<sup>33</sup> The main source of income therefore, was contributions by the people in one form or the other. For example, in 1948, the local communities in Ikot-Ekpene Circuit raised a total of £8,000 for new classroom blocks, teachers' houses and general running expenses of their schools.<sup>34</sup> This same system of educational finance applied to other Methodist Circuits in the East. It was possible and worked successfully on account of the people's great desire for education and the fear that unless they taxed themselves to raise the money, they might be overtaken by their neighbours in the race for progress through education.

Above the individual school committees, was a "Circuit Education and Staffing Committee". Its membership was drawn from among the headmasters of all the Group Schools, Church leaders and Catechists. The Circuit Minister was its chairman. It met once a year to post teachers and to take decisions on general development and administration of schools. It also served as a forum for providing the Minister, who was the overall Manager of all Methodist schools in the Circuit, with general guidelines on various issues related to education in all the associating localities.

The highest authority in the Methodist set-up was the Annual Synod of the Eastern Districts. It was responsible for the Mission's general programmes on all Church matters and its educational activities. In practice, the latter was carried out on its behalf by the Central Education Committee which reported to it at the annual meetings. The Chairman of the Synod was

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<sup>33</sup> Phillipson's Report, p. 217.

<sup>34</sup> ibid., p. 128.

the head of the Mission in the East and it was attended by representatives of the Church leaders, Ministers and heads of its educational institutions and workers from all the Circuits. Similar system of administration and sources of finance as described above also applied to the other Protestant Missions throughout Eastern Nigeria and the other parts of the country.<sup>35</sup> Discussing them individually would involve repeating what has already been said.

#### B. The Roman Catholic Mission

The set-up in the case of the Roman Catholic Mission had two distinct variations particularly in the area of the sources of educational finance. Its administrative arrangement was similar to that of the Protestants except that the various committees were made up of Church members only. The first type of arrangement was designed for educationally backward areas and the second for "highly developed school-going" areas. The first and the second arrangements are respectively illustrated with the examples of Nsukka and Newi Parishes of the Mission as they were described in 1948 by its Education Adviser, Rev. Father Jordan in a Memorandum<sup>36</sup> to the Committee on Grants-in-Aid of Education in Nigeria, (the Phillipson's Report).

As was mentioned earlier, there was not much difficulty in financing the assisted schools, and for this reason, we are again concentrating on the sources of revenue for the large majority of the unassisted Catholic schools. In 1942, the Mission's Parish of Nsukka had about 50 unassisted primary schools. The highest item of expenditure for running them was the salary bill for the teachers. The amount needed was derived from the following sources: 50 per cent from the central funds of the Catholic Mission in Eastern Nigeria, 35 per cent from the Church funds of the communities served, and 15 per cent from school fees. But in the more backward parts of the

<sup>35</sup>See Phillipson's Report, pp. 119-133.

<sup>36</sup>See Jordan, J.P., "Memorandum on the Organisation and Financing of Catholic Education Work" in Eastern Nigeria in Phillipson's Report, Appendix L, pp. 113-8.

Parish where no fees were charged, greater proportion of the salary bill was paid from the central funds in the hope that such communities would make up in the "better days" ahead.

It is important to take note of the basic difference between the Catholic and the Protestant Missions in respect of education finance. In areas where education was not yet in great demand, the former charged no fees and kept all their schools going from its central funds in the hope that such communities would make up later. But in the case of the Protestants particularly the Methodists, all institutions which the local people could not support, as we saw earlier, were closed down and their teachers transferred to other places. This was one of the reasons why the RCM later emerged as the single agency with the highest number of schools in the Eastern parts of Nigeria.

Later in the decade (the 1940's), "when the school-consciousness that swept Nigeria reacted on distant Nsukka,"<sup>37</sup> and there was an increased demand for education, the Mission introduced the system of 'Education Fund' which had long been in practice in other more advanced parts of the East. Under the scheme, both Christians and non-Christians in a locality were levied on a per capita basis to raise part of the funds for education. The money was primarily spent on teachers' salaries, school buildings and equipment. At that stage of Catholic education work at Nsukka as elsewhere in the East, the Mission had six main sources of revenue for the running of its schools. They were as follows:

- (i) Mission Central Funds;
- (ii) Monthly fees from Church members (the different monthly class dues by members of the Church);
- (iii) Subscriptions from Nsukka men working abroad;
- (iv) Proceeds from Church Annual Harvest Festivals;

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<sup>37</sup>ibid. p. 113.

(v) School Fees; and

(vi) The Education Fund.

In 1946 for example, the Mission had 56 unassisted primary schools in Nsukka Parish. The annual expenditure on all of them was nearly £2,820. Of this amount, about £2,310 came from sources (ii)-(vi) above. In other words, by that date, 81.9 per cent of the annual expenditure on education was raised by the local communities served. The Mission's contribution from its central funds was only 18.1 per cent. It should however be remembered that as a matter of policy, the Catholics charged no fees in their schools at the pioneering stages. This was done so as to attract more pupils and to entice their parents. During such periods, the Mission's educational expenses were met largely from the central funds, and monthly fees from Church members and the proceeds of the Annual Harvest Festivals.

The point above is that at first, the Mission bore greater part of educational costs and later, the local community took over and at times, paid back, indirectly, what the Mission had spent earlier. The importance of this point is that in the final analysis, it was the local community that actually paid for the cost of the schools before they became assisted, and together with the Government when they qualified for inclusion on the assisted list. The role of the Missions (Catholic and Protestant), was to sponsor the establishment of the schools in the first instance by providing the teachers and other educational facilities, and at times, finding the initial outlay which they later recovered from the local community.

In the case of the Newi Parish which was considered as an educationally developed area, local and district committees composed exclusively of Church members, and responsible to the Parish Priest/Manager, performed the function of raising the needed funds for unassisted schools. In places such as Newi, there were three main sources of revenue, namely:

(i) School Fees;

(ii) Monthly Assessment on all Christians; and

(iii) Periodic Special Collections by all Christians both at home and abroad.

The first source accounted for 50 to 80 per cent of the salary bill for the teachers while the balance and the cost of buildings and equipment were raised from the other two sources.

The procedure adopted for fund-raising was as follows: at the beginning of the school year, the manager posted teachers to all the schools in the Parish bearing in mind "the financial possibilities of each station",<sup>38</sup> - how much he needed for salaries and rough estimate of the amount to be derived from fees. From there, he worked out how much would be required to balance the budget of each school. It was this difference that its committee would be required to find through per capita levy on the local Christian community. In almost all cases, the people dutifully collected the needed amount without fail.

In the case of shortage at the end of the year or if a town or village wanted a new school or to expand an old one, a meeting of all influential Christians, at home and abroad, was summoned to decide on what should be the levy per head. Usually, it agreed on one shilling per pupil; two per woman; and five per man. The levy continued on annual basis until the shortage was made up or the project was completed. Contrary to its practice in backward areas, the Mission would not go to the aid of communities like Newi from its central funds "until their own good will and organising talent have been clearly shown."<sup>39</sup>

Thus, in Newi Parish "or indeed in any of the developed areas of the Eastern Provinces", Catholic educational work depended largely on communal effort. The process by which the financial support was raised was consistent with the people's way of life and social organisations described

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<sup>38</sup> ibid., p. 118.

<sup>39</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

in Chapter Two. It was usually carried out without a hitch, and Rev. Father Jordan described the procedure as follows:

"Many of the most influential members have lucrative employment abroad and keep in constant touch with the home front - and pay fees for many children in the home schools. The members of the committee domiciled in the town itself or in the townships not far away write regularly to their senior townsman in Lagos, Burutu, etc; giving all relevant financial data and suggesting lines of action in concert with local effort. He at once calls together his 'brothers' in the distant township, explains the position . . . and tells them what to pay ... Black sheep do not exist."<sup>40</sup>

By the above process, all sons and daughters of the soil both at home and abroad contributed annually for the provision of education in their home towns and villages. Although all the Missions employed similar means in raising money for their educational work, the Catholics, on account of <sup>its</sup> deeper understanding of the society and its people, proved more successful in channelling their love of homeland and the spirit of rivalry into this useful end. The Protestants were not so successful because they bothered less to understand the indigenous social system and also saw their mission as the destruction of all that the traditional society stood for as was shown earlier in Chapter Two.

There are no accurate and comprehensive records on the financial contributions for education from the joint efforts of the Missions and the people. For the year 1948 however, Phillipson estimated that they spent a total of £720,000<sup>41</sup> as against £1,305,058 by the Government in the whole of

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<sup>40</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>41</sup> Phillipson's Report, p. 55.

Southern Nigeria. In other words, the Missions and the local communities accounted for 35.6 per cent of the estimated £2,025,058 expended on education in that year. For the financial year, 1949/50, the Missions estimated their expenditure as £1,428,982 while that of the Government for the same period was £2,308,530.<sup>42</sup> The two figures show that 38.2 per cent of the total expenditure of £3,737,512 came from sources organised by the Missions. The following year, 1950/51, the Government paid out £2,412,239 in aid of education in Southern Nigeria. The amount from missionary and allied sources was given as £1.5 million<sup>43</sup> and this shows that for that year, voluntary efforts accounted for 38.3 per cent of the total bill of £3,912,239 expended on education.

Although the figures for the Missions were mere estimates, they serve to show that voluntarism in partnership with the Government was both the principle and the practice of educational provision in Southern Nigeria in general and the East in particular. It should however be borne in mind that the amounts quoted as coming from the Missions were largely raised from local sources such as school fees, church collections, levies on the local communities served, grants from Native Administrations and in the earlier stages of their work, from contributions by their parents bodies overseas.<sup>44</sup> Having said that, it should also be remembered that the initial costs were borne almost entirely by the Missions and their sponsoring agencies overseas; and here lies the importance of their early financial contributions to education.

In summary, the dominant role of the Missions in education was characterised by too many administrative units and as a corollary, this made it more difficult for the government to exercise effective control over their activities. Secondly, by the time the nationalists came to power, almost the entire cost of education was being paid by the Government and the local communities, and from this, it could rightly be claimed that the schools actually belonged to

<sup>42</sup>Annual Report, 1949/50; p. 14.

<sup>43</sup>Annual Report, 1950/51; p. 14.

<sup>44</sup>See Phillipson's Report, pp. 53-8.



the people and not the Missions as such. This however, does not nullify the importance of the fact that at the beginning, a much greater proportion of the cost was paid for by the Missions and their sponsors overseas. Finally, while the Protestant Missionary Societies as exemplified by the Methodists would close down a school whose local community could not support, the Catholics, on the other hand, financed similar schools of their own largely from their central funds in the hope of "better days" ahead. In most cases, the investment paid off and the policy also accounted partly for the stronger position of the Mission in education compared with any of its Protestant rivals.

#### 4.3. Relationship between the Missions and the Colonial Government in Education:

As we saw in the last chapter, the key note of the Colonial Government's policy in education was that of active and mutual co-operation between it on the one hand, and the Missions and the local communities on the other. This policy was embodied in Lord Lugard's Political Memorandum as the Governor of Nigeria in 1918. It was again restated and pursued by his successor, Sir Hugh Clifford who ruled the country from 1919-1926. In his own case, he went further to recommend that primary education be handed over entirely to the Missions, and this was one of the reasons why the majority of the Government primary institutions were phased out in favour of greater assistance to those of the Missions and other educational agencies. As a matter of general policy, there was no preferential treatment for any particular Mission. They were all treated alike and so, the position was and as Inyang has pointed out,

"From their own experience in Britain, the administrative officers were well disposed towards the Missions. Official policy attempted to be impartial whether the Mission was foreign or British, and

this policy helped educational progress in the country . . ."45

But in spite of the above policy and the honest endeavours of both parties to make it work, there were areas of conflict and occasional disagreement.<sup>46</sup> For instance, the Missions were unable to reconcile "their primary object of evangelization with the demands of Government policy on the one hand and the conflicting aspirations of their African flock on the other".<sup>47</sup> The Government wanted education in towns to qualify its recipients "for work in office and business", and for those in rural areas, to reconcile them with the traditional occupations. On their part, the people wanted education principally as a ticket into the superior culture of the Western world and for salaried jobs. Quite often, the demands of the Government and those of the people came into open conflict with the Missionary objective of winning converts through schools. An example of this was the disagreement between the CMS and the Government over the provisions of the Education Code of 1903. But in the end, and as we saw in the last chapter, the spirit of co-operation prevailed and the Government conceded the Society's objections through the Education Ordinance of 1916.

But inspite of divergent aims and objectives, and disagreements occasioned by them, the policy of partnership was actively pursued throughout the colonial period. In 1931 for example, there was a general public concern at the alarming increase in the number of jobless ex-standard VI boys roaming around the streets in towns. The Government attributed this to the failure of the Missions to adapt their school curricula to the needs of the different local communities as it had earlier directed. In response, a European spokesman of the Missionary Societies in Calabar called on all the denominations to co-operate with the Government and to pay more attention to agriculture in their schools. They should do all that was possible "to adapt

<sup>45</sup> Inyang, P.E.B., op. cit. p. 317.

<sup>46</sup> See Berman, E.H., op. cit. pp. 18-20.

<sup>47</sup> Annual Report, 1931, pp. 18-19.

the schools to suit the real needs of the country-side" as was directed by the Government, and in conclusion, he observed:

"I am amazed that in answer to public demand, we continue to take boys by the thousands from farming and fishing on which the people depend, and then so treat them that very few will ever dream of returning to useful and productive labour."<sup>48</sup>

Three years later (1933), a Government statement re-stressed the policy that all Mission schools that had attained the required standards of efficiency were to "be regarded as filling a place in the scheme of education as important as schools run by Government." The policy statement went on to say that "certain kinds of education are more suitably given by religious bodies than by the Government"; and for this reason; "the greatest importance should be attached to religious beliefs and moral instruction in all areas where contact with civilization tends to weaken tribal authority and the sanctions of existing beliefs".<sup>49</sup>

The statement was a redefinition of the basis of Government policy towards the Missions in education and the type of instruction given in their schools. Its timing was intended to reassure the Societies that the reduction in financial assistance to their schools did not stem from change of policy but from the effects of the world-wide economic depression of the 1930's. As we saw earlier in this chapter, in 1933, the original provision of £301,597, in the Estimates for education was later cut down to £284,025 and this meant less amount going to the Missions as grants-in-aid. In conclusion, the statement reiterated that the Government would continue to assist the Missions and to welcome the valuable job they were doing towards the educational development of the country.

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<sup>48</sup>"A Missionary Manager of Schools", Calabar, in Annual Report 1931, p. 19.

<sup>49</sup>Esua, E.E. "Christ's Kingdom is Being Built Through the Schools" in The Christian Council of Nigeria: Building for Tomorrow, N.C. Press, Lagos, 1960; p. 11.

All through the period therefore, the cardinal principles of partnership between the Missions and the Government were never in serious jeopardy, and even in the face of grave difficulties, each side endeavoured to uphold them. For instance, in 1940, the Education Department reported that:

"In spite of difficulties and discouragements caused by the inability of Government to provide adequate financial help, the Missions have loyally and ungrudgingly given their full support and co-operation."<sup>50</sup>

Three years later, the Government again thanked and praised them for their continued "excellent-cooperation" in educational matters.<sup>51</sup>

In 1945, the Director in an address to the Eastern Board of Education at Enugu on the future of partnership between "Church and State" in education, emphasized that the Government was only "the patron rather than the agent of most of the educational effort in the country"; and that "while the needs of the country required the Government to play a larger part in providing or assisting, it was important, on moral and practical grounds alike, that the work of the Voluntary Agencies should be encouraged and extended. In other words, Government and the Societies should be close partners in educational enterprise."<sup>52</sup>

On the crucial question of control, the policy was that as a result of increased public expenditure on education, "Government must require that its policy be carried out and its standard maintained while the Societies must insist on maintaining the essential character of their schools."<sup>53</sup> This policy was consistent with the one prevailing in England and Wales in respect of 'Aided Schools' as was shown in Chapter One. In other words, Mission institutions in Nigeria assisted from public funds were accorded the same status as their 'aided' counterparts back home in England. Policies

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<sup>50</sup> Annual Report, 1940, p. 6.

<sup>51</sup> Annual Report, 1943, p. 3.

<sup>52</sup> Annual Report, 1945, p. 5.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

and practices such as this explain the great space earlier devoted to Church and State in English Education.

At the same time, more generous grants were to be made to the Missions to enable them to develop and expand their secondary schools. In return, Government representatives were appointed to the Boards of Governors of all such institutions. The intention was not for the State to take over or dominate their management but to ensure that the grants made to them were actually spent in the best interest of the public and not diverted into denominational use.

By 1945 too and in the same way as was provided in the English Education Act of 1944, the Government also adopted the policy of ensuring more active public participation in the control and management of Mission schools. The first step in this direction was the establishment of Local Education Committees whose membership was made up of both Africans and Europeans. In some cases, the local Administrative Officer was appointed the Chairman. The committees were not invested with executive powers. Their main function was to be advisory in such areas as the location, opening and closing of schools, organising school meals and similar amenities and in providing a "forum for discussing the common educational needs and problems of the area". They were also intended to serve as the nucleus of future Local Education Authorities similar to those of England and Wales.

At first, the Missionary Societies were apprehensive over the appointment of such committees for the fear that if they were vested with executive powers, they might interfere with denominational funds. But when the Government reassured them that as of then, the authority of the committees was to be "moral and not legal"; and further emphasized that it was necessary to realize that "unrestricted private enterprise and the method of laissez-faire were no longer adequate for the provision of education", the representatives of the Missions along with the other members of the Board accepted and adopted the policy proposal.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Annual Report, 1945, p.6.

Finally, towards the end of the period of complete colonial rule in Nigeria, the policy of the Government towards the Missions in education and the basis of the relationship between the two were restated by Sir Arthur Richards, the then Governor of the country. In a speech to the Legislative Council in 1947 prior to the introduction of far reaching measures aimed at consolidating and re-defining educational policies throughout Nigeria (see *infra*, pp.250-61), the Governor said *inter alia*:

"... No one will question the immense value of the contribution which the Voluntary Agencies have made to the progress of education in this country, predominantly in the Southern Regions". For this reason, "the Government is under an obligation to approach the problems of the Voluntary Agencies in a spirit of practical sympathy."

He went on to say that in future public revenue could only be expended on non-government schools on the basis of "efficiency and social usefulness". The Voluntary Agencies occupied a very important place in the education system of the country particularly in the Southern Regions and that it was the policy of his Government to do all it could in support of the Missions in that position.<sup>55</sup>

The point to note in respect of the relationship between the Colonial Government and the Missions in education is that inspite of occasional conflicts and disagreements, both sides accepted the principle of partnership and co-operated reasonably well to make it succeed. The Government was contented with the power to control and regulate the school system in return for its financial assistance while leaving its management largely in the hands of the Missions. It is also important to take note of the policy of ensuring greater public participation through the establishment of Local Education Committee as the forerunner of Local Education Authorities. This is because the attempt to implement this by the Nationalist Government in

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<sup>55</sup>"A Speech by His Excellency the Governor Sir Arthur Richards G.C.M.G., to the Legislative Council, 28th August, 1948" quoted in Phillipson's Report, Appendix A; pp. 101-3.

later years proved the parting of the ways between it and the Missions particularly, the RCM. We should also note the Colonial Government's objectives for education because the difference between them and those of the Nationalists partly accounted for the conflicts and difficulties of the later years. However, the overall picture of the Colonial Government policy prior to the assumption of power by the Nationalists will be treated more fully in the next and last section of this chapter.

#### 4.4 Educational Activities and Policies of the Government, 1930-50

The first action of the Government during this period was an amendment to the Education Ordinance of 1926. Schools were reclassified into elementary which included Infants I and II and Standards I to IV; and Middle, made up of classes I to VI. Under the old nomenclature, there were Infants I and II and Primary Standards I to VI; and Secondary Forms I to VI. The main difference between the two was that in the new classification the break at the top of the elementary stage came after six years, while in the old, the break was after eight years at Standard VI, and this corresponded to the Middle Class II in the new classification. Some of the Missions preferred the old system and they were allowed to continue with it as the amendment did not make it compulsory for all schools to change to the new classification. The purpose of the Government was to bring the Middle School in line with the system as it operated in England at the time. The only difference was that the syllabuses in both countries were not to be exactly the same.<sup>56</sup>

The grades of schools under the new classification were as shown in Fig. VII, below.

By the same amendment, all elementary schools were henceforth to be inspected partly by European and partly by African staff. The latter was to

<sup>56</sup>See Annual Report, 1931, pp. 7 and 15.

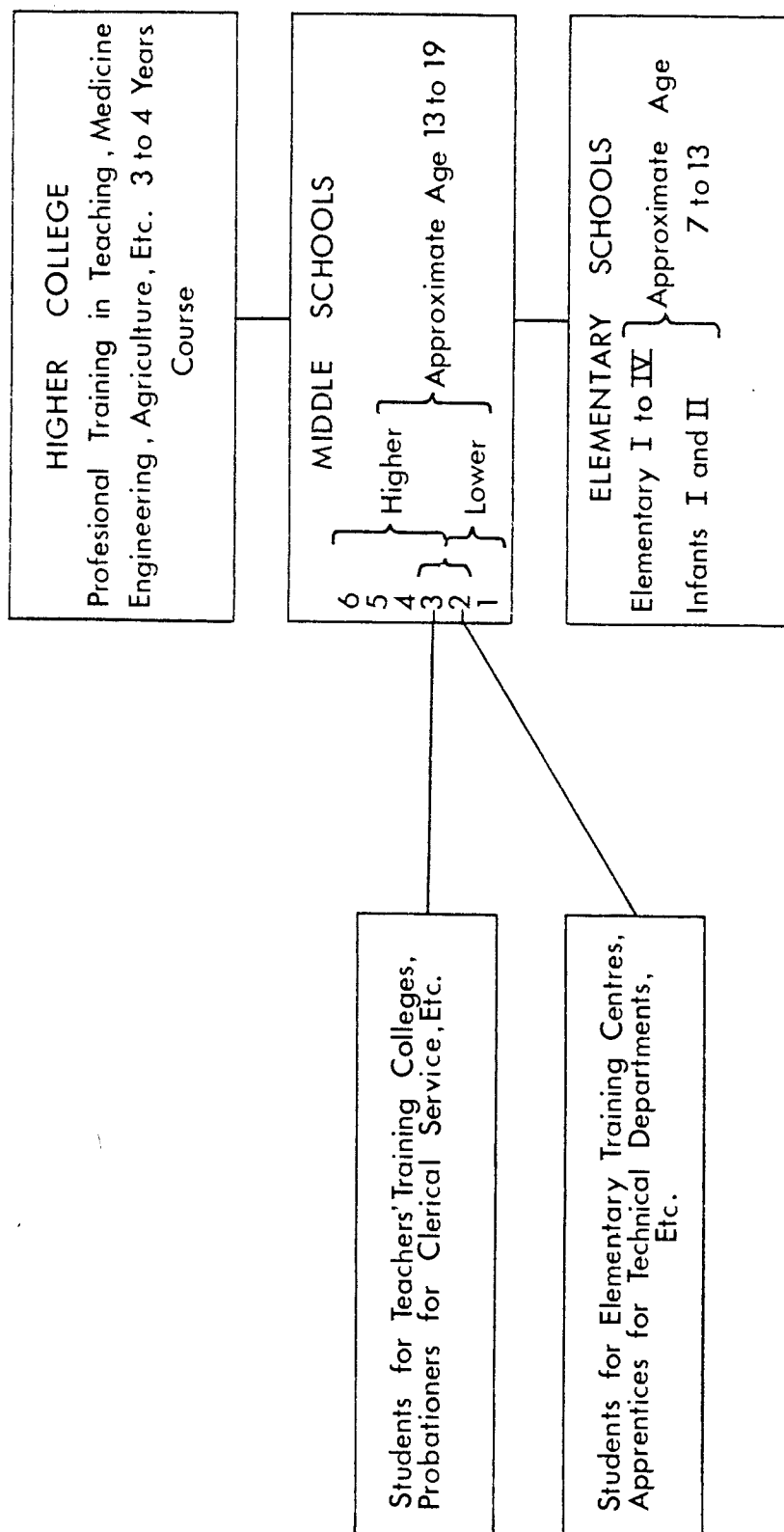


FIG. VIII. SOUTHERN PROVINCES (Grades of Schools, 1930).<sup>57</sup>  
<sup>57</sup>Source:— Annual Report 1931, p.9.



be made up of visiting teachers and a great deal of their work was to be with the unassisted schools. The Missions were also empowered to appoint their own visiting teachers to assist those of the Government. Both categories were to be drawn from the cadre of experienced Grade II teachers. On appointment, they were first to be attached to European Superintendents of Schools who were to go round with them for a few months teaching them what to look for and what to do. After that, they were left on their own to go round to advise and to demonstrate teaching techniques in schools. They were also made to keep in regular touch with the European Inspectors who once in a while, re-inspected one or two schools already visited by the Nigerian Assistants to assess how efficient the inspection work had been.<sup>58</sup> This measure was adopted to ensure that Government standards were maintained not only in the assisted schools as before but also in the unassisted ones. By it, Government regulations were extended to cover all schools.

The above provision by the amendment was a clear indication that the Government was no longer prepared to close its eyes to what went on in the unassisted schools. It was the policy at the time that the State should assume full responsibility for the control of education in all its ramifications. Even the training of teachers which hitherto had been entirely in the hands of the Missions was to receive direct attention from the Government. To this end, it opened its own training centres in the three main language areas of Southern Nigeria, one at Ibadan for the Yorubas, another at Uyo for the Efik and the third at Enugu for the Ibos. At the same time, three translation bureaux charged with the responsibility for supplying text books and other literature in those vernacular languages were also established. By 1930, too, the Government had opened three middle schools of its own, at Lagos, Ibadan and Umuahia. They were to serve as models for the Missions in the establishment of similar institutions.<sup>59</sup>

<sup>58</sup>See Annual Reports, 1931, p. 7; and 1936, p. 11.

<sup>59</sup>Annual Report, 1931, loc. cit.

In a policy statement issued in 1931, the Government reaffirmed its intention to gradually phase out its own primary schools "as facilities became available in Mission, Native Administration and other proprietary schools." More financial assistance was to be given to these bodies and the Government was to intensify its supervisory and regulatory functions. It was also reported that some 'good progress' had been made in controlling the indiscriminate establishment of new schools. The Missions had been persuaded to merge some of their institutions while some others were closed outright on the orders of the Governor. The 'progress' was attributed largely to the good work of the Inspectors, Visiting Teachers and the co-operation of the Missions themselves.<sup>60</sup>

The policy statement also announced that the Government would no longer allow individual school proprietors to teach what they liked or what the people wanted as was largely the case in the past. As a matter of policy, all schools were to give "special prominence to subjects which will be useful to a member of an African community". The intention here was to re-orientate the schools to the needs of the local communities in which they were located. The Government took the lead by introducing such curriculum first in its own schools and urged the Missions to copy its example. In his first report on the progress so far made in the teaching of the practical subjects in Government schools in the East, the Chief Inspector of Education wrote inter alia:

"In Government schools the farm continues to be a centre of activity. Plantations of oil palm, cocoa and coffee have been made at several schools, and that side of the farm work shows encouraging results and is a valuable opportunity of attracting the interests of the rising generation to an important side of agriculture in districts where it is still undeveloped."<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> ibid., p. 14.

<sup>61</sup> ibid., p. 15.

As a means of ensuring that the new curriculum was adopted by all assisted schools, the Government abolished the old Class II Middle or Standard Six examination and replaced it with the First School Leaving Certificate examination at the end of primary education. No school was to enter candidates until it was approved by the Education Department. Approval could only be obtained on the basis of:

- (a) efficiency;
  - (b) the following of a Government prescribed curriculum of study; and
  - (d) practical activities in any three or more of the following subjects:
    - (i) Music - choral singing, concerts, plays;
    - (ii) Physical Training and games;
    - (iii) Gardening and school farm;
    - (iv) Craft work -
      - either (a) Carpentry;
      - or (b) Simple tin and metal work;
      - (c) Leather work;
      - (d) Wood carving;
      - (e) Any other craft approved by the Department.
- e.g. glazed pottery work.<sup>62</sup>

The new curriculum and the policy of making its adoption a condition for approval to enter candidates for the primary school final examination underline the aims and objectives of the Colonial system of education in Nigeria and the other British African Colonies<sup>63</sup> and the importance the Government attached to them. Unfortunately, they were neither what the people wanted nor what the Missions would like to impart through their schools. The important point here however, is to show what the system of education was

<sup>62</sup>Annual Report, 1936; p. 4.

<sup>63</sup>Cf. McWilliam, H.O.A.; and M.A. Kwamena-Poh, The Development of Education in Ghana, (new edition) Longman Group Ltd.; London, 1975, pp. 48-50.

officially intended to achieve - namely, to reconcile the people with their traditional environment and occupations. The irony was that this same type of education was exactly what the people had rejected in favour of Western values. The new policy also shows that the Government was then more than ever determined to exercise effective control over all aspects of the school system.

The official policy on the content of education was accepted by the Missionary Societies and as we saw in section 4.3, they were willing to gear the teaching in their schools as was directed by the Government which also took the lead in re-organising its own schools along these lines. The relevance of all this is to show that neither the Colonial Administration nor the Societies was directly responsible for the academic and theoretical nature of education in Nigeria. It was the people who, acting on the social and economic forces playing on them at the time, would not accept an education system aimed at making them good farmers and craftsmen. If therefore the products of the system handed down from the Colonial period are unfunctional, and if any blame is to be apportioned, it should be to the social and economic forces of the period and not to the Colonial Government, the Missionary Societies or the people themselves.

By 1936, education had come to be regarded as much of Government function as national security, economic development, maintenance of law and order, the administration of justice, etc. In recognition of this, the Director of Education was appointed a member of both the Legislative and Executive Councils. He was stationed in Lagos with assistants at Enugu and Kaduna. There was also a Chief Inspector stationed in Lagos. He was charged with the responsibility for teacher training colleges but could also visit the principal assisted primary schools whenever he was on tour. But ordinarily, the responsibility for such institutions was assigned to the Provincial Superintendents. In the case of assisted secondary schools, their inspection and assessment were usually carried out by a panel of two

or three Superintendents for each of them. In addition and as was mentioned earlier, each Mission had government-paid Supervisors who visited and inspected all its schools. All this was in addition to the cadre of Government, Native Administration and Mission Travelling or Visiting Teachers discussed earlier. Their job was mainly to keep in regular touch with all schools. Those of them drawn from the Missions were usually attached to assisted Central schools from where they looked after the feeder ones within the locality.<sup>63</sup> We shall return to Government's administrative set-up for education as of 1950, when we discuss the organisation of the Education Department later in this chapter.

In 1936, too, the Government directed that Church and School accounts were to be kept separately. Hitherto, the Missions had been keeping the two together as they saw the two institutions as inseparable from their own point of view. It also ruled that from that date, the minimum salaries recommended by the Education Code were to be paid to all teachers in assisted schools. As we saw earlier, during the economic depression of the 1930's, the Missions, as a result of reduction in Government grants, had cut down the scales of salaries for their teachers. But when conditions improved and even after more money had been made available to them, some of them still refused to pay the prescribed minimum salaries. Soon after the ruling was made public, the Nigerian Union of Teachers (NUT) founded five years earlier, petitioned the Government asking that its members, the Mission teachers be placed on the same salary scales as their counterparts employed in Government schools.

Several reasons were advanced why the demand could not be met. In the first place, the Government argued that the Mission teachers were "not in its direct employment or under its control".<sup>64</sup> For this reason, it could not

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<sup>63</sup>Annual Report, 1936; p. 15.

<sup>64</sup>Phillipson's Report; p. 101.

assume full responsibility for their remuneration. Secondly, the Missions themselves argued that it would be impossible to find the money to pay such scales to the teachers in their unassisted schools even if the Government were prepared to do so for those on the assisted list. Furthermore, some of their best qualified teachers were posted to the unassisted ones to help raise standards. These arguments failed to persuade the teachers to drop the demand. Their Union therefore requested a meeting with the Director of Education on the issue. The Government stand at the meeting was that with the policy of phasing out its own schools, there would soon be no Government teachers and then, the question of disparity in salary scales would no longer arise.<sup>65</sup>

In addition to lack of uniformity in the salary scales among individual Missions, and between their teachers on one hand and those of the Government on the other, there was also the question of fees varying from one agency school to the other. To remedy this anomaly and therefrom generate more funds for education, the NUT called on the Government to introduce uniform fees throughout the system. The Government again replied that this was not possible. This was so because of such practices as the remission of part fees to children of Mission employees and Church workers; the reduction of fees for second and third children of the same parents; and the Government policy of giving more financial assistance to schools in educationally and economically backward areas which meant less school income from fees. There was also the arrangement whereby the local communities bore part of the annual cost of Government schools in their midst in return for non-payment of fees by their children.

Until the end of the period under review, fees in Government Junior Primary Schools were 10s and £1 in Senior Primary per annum. In Mission schools,

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<sup>65</sup>Annual Report, 1936; p. 16; see also Smyke, R.J. and D.C. Storer, Nigeria Union of Teachers An Official History, Ibadan University Press, 1974; pp. 32 and 144-5.

they varied from nothing (mainly in Catholic institutions) to £1.5s in Junior Primary and from £1 to £2.10s in Senior Primary Schools per annum. At the secondary level, tuition fees in Government schools were at the rate of £6 per annum and, depending on the area and the estimated cost of living, boarding fees varied from £12 to £21 per annum. In Mission schools, tuition fees ranged from £6 to £14 and boarding from £10 to £24 per annum.<sup>66</sup> The lack of uniformity in fees and the practices mentioned in the preceeding paragraph made it difficult to estimate with reasonable degree of accuracy, the income likely to accrue from fees.

It should be mentioned here that the lack of uniform scales and conditions of service for all teachers remained a major problem for education till and after the nationalists came to power. It was also given as one of the main weaknesses of partnership and as one of the reasons why the schools were nationalized. The problem of lack of uniformity in fees also remained unresolved till the introduction of responsible government. Both problems should be seen as inheritance from the colonial period. As we shall see later, both of them became sources of bitter conflict between the Missions and the Government in later years.

The Education Department common First School Leaving Certificate examination introduced in 1935 was abolished five years later for the reason that it was unwieldy and therefore could not be handled by the drastically reduced strength of the Officials. Many of them had been called out for military and other essential services following the out-break of the Second World War. The economy of the country was also affected by the war situation and in consequence, grants to Mission schools were reduced. For example, the amount went down from £102,050 in 1940 to £100,889 in 1942.<sup>67</sup> As in the previous decade when the economic depression created a similar situation, the

<sup>66</sup> Annual Report, 1949; p. 19.

<sup>67</sup> Annual Reports, 1940, p. 2; and 1942, p. 3.

teachers bore the brunt. Their increments were withheld by the Missions and some of the highly qualified ones were dismissed because their salary bill could not be met. Facilities for education were generally reduced and many Provinces were left without Education Officers. The situation was keenly felt by the public "especially in parts of the Eastern Province".<sup>68</sup>

The abolition of the Government conducted First School Leaving Certificate examination meant that from 1940, each agency was vested with the power to conduct its own Standard Six examination. Certificates were to be issued to successful candidates "who have completed the primary course in an approved school with 75 per cent of attendance in Standard VI."<sup>69</sup> It is important to stress this point because one of the first steps taken by the Eastern Nigeria Government in its drive for greater share of educational control was to take over the conduct of the examination from the Missions.

At the secondary school level, the examination policy of the Government was reviewed by a Conference of West African Directors of Education held at Ibadan in April, 1949. Its purpose was to work out a common examination policy for British West Africa. It recommended that a West African Examinations Council be established to perform the following functions:

- (a) Advise the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate on the adaptation of their examinations to local needs;
- (b) Assume responsibility on behalf of the West African Governments for determining what other examinations should be held in West Africa and on what conditions;
- (c) Provide the central executive machinery for the conduct and supervision of the examinations through local agencies.<sup>70</sup>

The recommendations were accepted by the Governments and this was the origin of the West African Examinations Council which controlled and still

<sup>68</sup>Annual Report, 1942, p. 1.

<sup>69</sup>Annual Report, 1940, loc. cit.

<sup>70</sup>Annual Report, 1949/50, p. 36.



controls secondary school leaving certificate and other examinations for the four English-speaking West African countries of Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. It has its headquarters in Accra, Ghana with branch national offices in the other countries. Its Executive Council draws its membership from representatives of the Ministries of Education, the Universities, the Teaching Profession and Conferences of Secondary School Principals in the four countries.<sup>71</sup> Thus, by the end of the period under review, Government control of education had been extended to the curricula and final examinations at both the secondary and primary levels.

In spite of the effects of the Second World War, the demand for education especially at the secondary level continued to mount. In response to the demand, the Missions and other private agencies opened more such schools at times without prior permission from the Education Department. In some cases, some of the "schools which have no prospect of reaching even a low standard of efficiency" were closed down on the order of the Government.<sup>72</sup> In spite of measures such as the above, the number of schools continued to multiply. This led to a further amendment of the Education Ordinance in 1942 to "afford a stricter control over the opening of schools".<sup>73</sup> But all this seemed to have had very little effect on the actual situation. The number of unassisted schools at both levels continued to be rapidly on the increase and in 1944, Owerri Province was reported to be on top the list with 1,080 such schools.<sup>74</sup> A year later, the number was reported to have gone up by 10 per cent throughout the Eastern Provinces and the report added that:

"The Ibo and Ibibio peoples continue to show the greatest enthusiasm for education, the number of non-assisted schools in the Owerri Province for instance, being now nearly 1,200. In the East, the Ogoja Province remains the most 'backward area' though even here things are beginning to move".<sup>75</sup>

<sup>71</sup> See Unesco: Education in Nigeria (Vol. II), op.cit. Appendix 11.3.

<sup>72</sup> Annual Report, 1940; p. 3.

<sup>73</sup> Annual Report, 1942; p. 1.

<sup>74</sup> Annual Report, 1944; p. 7.

<sup>75</sup> Annual Report, 1945; p. 7.

The above state of affairs was another evidence of the people's spirit of rivalry then transferred to the acquisition of formal education and the ownership of schools on village basis.

The rapid increase in the number of schools, and the inability of the Government to provide corresponding financial assistance to the Mission motivated a deputation by the Department of Education to the Governor, Sir Bernard Bourdillon

"On the unhappy state of affairs resulting from the financial inability of the Government to increase the provision for educational grants-in-aid."<sup>76</sup>

As the Government had no money of its own to cope with the situation, it made an application to the Colonial Secretary for a grant of £26,000 from the Parliamentary Vote for Development and Welfare to enable it to meet with urgent needs in the field of education in Nigeria. In his reply, the Colonial Secretary called for "a systematic plan of development over a period of years by stages".<sup>77</sup>

The Nigerian Government quickly prepared a ten-year development plan, 1942-52 and submitted to the Colonial Secretary. The plan was aimed at providing:

- (i) a type of education more suitable to the needs of the country;
- (ii) better conditions of service for teachers employed by the Missions and other voluntary bodies so as to provide better trained and more contented staff;
- (iii) more adequate financial assistance to the Missions and other voluntary educational bodies;
- (iv) financial assistance to the Native Administrations in order to assist them to maintain an efficient staff of teachers and expand education in their areas; and

<sup>76</sup>Phillipson's Report; p. 33.

<sup>77</sup>ibid; p. 34; see also Annual Report, 1949, p. 11.

(v) controlled expansion of facilities within financial limits.<sup>78</sup>

The Colonial Secretary rejected the plan on the grounds that it was not ambitious enough and directed that it should be reconsidered "with a view to providing a junior primary education within a generation for all Nigerian children of school-going age".<sup>79</sup> In the mean time, the Government of Nigeria stretched its resources to provide all it could for education, and between 1940 and 1948, an additional grant of £830,000 was made from local resources. The amount was primarily intended to enable the Voluntary Agencies to pay their teachers at levels comparable to other salaried persons of similar qualifications.

The events from the deputation to the Governor to the abortive ten-year development plan and the subsequent interim grants by the Government are of special relevance to this study for two main reasons. In the first place, they reinforce the point that as of that date, education in Nigeria had really become generally accepted as a state responsibility in partnership with the other agencies. Secondly, the directive that the plan should provide for junior primary education for all school-age children was similar to the original policy adopted by the nationalists when they first came to power in Eastern Nigeria. But, and as will be shown later, this was changed soon afterwards to a more ambitious programme and the lack of adequate financial resource to back it up led to a bitter conflict with the Missions. We shall later examine the scheme in greater detail.

Going back to the main course of events during the period under review, in 1944, the Director of Education was instructed by the Governor to review the educational policy in the country bearing in mind the directive by the Colonial Secretary over the 1942 plan. After a series of consultations with various interest groups in education, a comprehensive Memorandum was drawn up and submitted to the Executive Council in 1945. It made

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<sup>78</sup>Phillipson's Report, pp. 34-5.

<sup>79</sup>Annual Report, 1949, loc. cit.

recommendations on the expansion and improvement of educational facilities and on its general principles and objectives.<sup>80</sup> But here we are concerned only with its recommendations on primary and secondary education.

At the primary level, the Memorandum observed that education could not "be provided with advantage except with the active co-operation of the communities concerned". For this reason, it recommended the formation of Provincial Education Committees which were to work in co-operation with the Advisory Boards in each Group of Provinces. The duties of the Committees were outlined as follows:

- (a) "To make plans for the progressive development and comprehensive organisation of primary education within the area for which it is appointed, in co-operation with interested persons or organisations and to implement their plans to the best of its ability".
- (b) "To examine notifications of intentions to establish primary schools and to make recommendations on such applications".
- (c) "To advise on the expenditure of such funds as may be available for the support of primary education and for the furtherance of other approved educational purposes and generally to supervise the expenditure of such funds".
- (d) "To make themselves familiar with the social services performed by Government Departments and by persons and organisations working in the area; and through the schools in the area, to co-operate with them in the furtherance of their work, in particular where such work is concerned with rural community education."<sup>81</sup>

On secondary education, the Memorandum recommended that stricter measures be adopted to check the indiscriminate establishment to schools at this level. It went on to make five distinct recommendations - namely:

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<sup>80</sup> ibid., pp. 11-12.

<sup>81</sup> Memorandum on Educational Policy in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 7-8.

- (i) No persons or body should be allowed to open a secondary school without the previous consent of the Director of Education.
- (ii) All secondary schools should be registered with the Education Department.
- (iii) The Director should have the right to close those schools which had no possibility of sound development.
- (iv) No financial assistance from public funds should be given to any secondary school which had not a responsible management body, the constitution of which precluded the possibility of personal gain.
- (v) The accounts of secondary schools receiving financial assistance from Government should be submitted to the Director of Education after being audited by an approved auditor.<sup>82</sup>

The recommendations as outlined above were accepted by the Governor-in-Council and based on the entire Memorandum, a Ten-Year Development Plan for Education was drawn up and submitted to the Colonial Secretary for grants under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act for its implementation. The main areas of emphasis in the Plan for our purpose, were on the expansion of facilities for secondary education and teacher training both of which were seen as the pivot for further satisfactory expansion of the primary system. It also made provision for a sum of £9,000 as grants to the Missions to enable them to appoint and support two Education Advisers, one for the RCM and the other for the Protestants.<sup>83</sup> When the allocated funds ran out, the recurrent costs of the appointments were to be met from special annual grants from the Government to the Missions.

The Plan was approved by the Colonial Secretary and Mr. (later Sir Sydney) Phillipson, the former Financial Secretary to the Government of Nigeria was appointed to study and make recommendations on the system of educational finance in the country. He was assisted by Mr. W.E. Holt, the

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<sup>82</sup> ibid., p. 26.

<sup>83</sup> Annual Report, 1949; p. 25.

then Chief Inspector of Education for the Eastern Group of Provinces. The result of their inquiry was published in a report entitled Grants-in-Aid of Education in Nigeria from which the author has heavily drawn and referred to as "Phillipson's Report". It formed a part of the Education Ordinance introduced in 1948 and which was based on both the Memorandum and the Plan. We shall first outline the provisions of the Ordinance as they affected primary and secondary education and also those of the Phillipson's Report. Both documents were debated and passed by the Regional Houses of Assembly<sup>84</sup> and the Legislative Council in 1948.

In moving the first reading of the Bill for the new Education Ordinance in the Legislative Council, the Director of Education summarized its objectives as follows:

"This bill aims at creating quality in the regulation of a vast and expanding system; at facilitating efficient managership; at building up a system of good teachers, and securing an adequate contribution from local resources and at supplementing that contribution by an adequate grant from the central revenues. It seeks to build up a system of consultation at every level by combining the spirit of national education with the spirit of regionalization; it points the way to local government in the sphere of primary education and it offers a long term method of financing wide spread primary education by an easily understood system which divides the cost between the Government and the communities which are served".<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup>It should be recalled as shown in Chapter Two that in 1947, the three former Groups of Provinces in Nigeria were constituted into the Northern, Western and Eastern Regions. At the same time, an advisory House of Assembly was established for each of them in Kaduna, Ibadan and Enugu respectively. They were made up of official and unofficial nominated members.

<sup>85</sup>"A speech by the Director of Education, Mr. R.A. McL. Davidson to the Legislative Council, Lagos, 1948" in Annual Report, 1948, p. 4; see also Annual Report, 1949; pp. 25-31.

The Ordinance itself repealed the Education Code of 1926 and its subsequent amendments. In relation to primary and secondary education, it made four principal changes which were as outlined below:

(a) The establishment of Central and Regional Boards of Education which unlike the old ones, had unofficial majority in their membership. Again, in addition to advisory functions, they were also vested with executive powers in respect of opening and closing of schools. The provision in this regard was as follows:

"No new school may be established in the Territory without the consent of the appropriate Regional Deputy Director of Education, or the Colony Education Office (see Chart on the organisation of the Education Department, p.260) The Education Officer in-charge of the area concerned must be notified not less than three months before the school is to be opened, of the name and address of both the Proprietor and the Manager, the situation of the school, together with a plan of the buildings, the type of school proposed, and the numbers, qualifications and nationality of the staff. The Regional Deputy Director of Education may prohibit the opening of a new school if he is not satisfied that the school would be efficiently conducted or adequately staffed. An appeal from his decision may be made to the Regional Board of Education, and thence, if necessary, to the Central Board of Education. The Regional Board is empowered to order a school to be closed where, on inspection, it is satisfied that the school is conducted in a manner which is not in the interests of the pupils, the proprietor of any school so closed having the right of appeal to the Central Board."<sup>86</sup>

This elaborate provision was aimed at ensuring more effective Government control of educational expansion throughout the country.

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<sup>86</sup> Annual Report, 1949; p. 13.

(b) Instead of the Government appointing all members of the Regional and Central Boards of Education, the new Ordinance provided for some of them to be appointed by the Regional Houses of Assembly, the House of Chiefs and the Lagos Town Council.

(c) Local Educational Authorities to be established in areas where Native Administration was at an advanced stage of development, and Local Education Committees in others where it was not yet functioning so well.

(d) Complete reorganisation of the grant-in-aid system.

The main provisions here were designed to remedy the following defects in the old arrangement:

(i) The payment of grants to Voluntary Agencies to enable them to pay their teachers at certain levels without reference to the efficiency, educational necessity or social usefulness of the schools in which they were employed.

But under the new Regulations, grants to assisted schools were to be calculated in accordance with a fixed formula which included the recognised expenses made up of approved teachers' salaries and contributions for buildings, equipment and administrative costs all of which were to be assessed bearing in mind the level of development of the area concerned.

(ii) As a result of series of interim measures taken during the last war years, by 1947, the grant-in-aid system covered all Voluntary Agency school but at the same time, not all of them were under Government control and supervision

(iii) The principle adopted in 1927 whereby grants were made to assisted schools on the basis of efficiency and to the unassisted ones in respect of certificated teachers on their staff.

(iv) Although the Northern and Southern Protectorate were amalgamated in 1914, it was not until 1929 that the Education Departments of the two were merged into one. In spite of this, the system of grants-in-aid



continued to differ between the North and the South. The new Regulation sought to introduce a uniform system for the whole country.

(v) The exclusion of Native Administration schools from Government grants-in-aid.

(vi) Much of the work of calculating the grants was done by the Voluntary Agencies. The new system would relieve them of this aspect of the job. It was thence to be done by officials of the Education Department.

(vii) The old system was so complicated that neither the Government nor the Voluntary Agencies had sufficient prior knowledge of their commitments for advance planning.<sup>87</sup>

It was the last anomaly that the Governor, Sir Arthur Richards, had in mind when he said in a speech to the Legislative Council in 1947 that it was:

"essential to redefine the relationship between Government and Voluntary Agencies so that in future, Government, the Voluntary Agencies and their respective staffs know clearly their several and related responsibilities".<sup>88</sup>

In addition to rectifying the above defects in the old system the new Ordinance and its Regulations also made other important provisions, namely:

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<sup>87</sup> Annual Report 1948; pp. 5-6. For full details of the new Grant-in-Aid Regulations, see Phillipson's Report, op. cit. pp. 137-159.

<sup>88</sup> Sir Arthur Richards in a speech to the Legislative Council, (August, 1947), in Ministry of Education, Report on the Review of Educational System in Eastern Nigeria, Official Document No. 19 of 1962; Government Printer, Enugu, p. 6 (Chairman, Prof. K.O. Dike and hereinafter referred to as "Dike Commission Report").

(a) The Government was to continue with the policy of making grants only to schools which were recognised to be "educationally necessary, socially useful and efficient" taking into consideration the available staff and the general circumstances.

(b) Grants to schools should take into consideration the economic circumstances of the areas concerned. More aid was to be given to the relatively poorer areas.

(c) The Government would encourage and conserve the spirit of local initiative and self help.

(d) Payment of teachers at Government recommended scales to be recognised as a condition for receiving grants.

(e) Local Authorities and Communities to be given sufficient powers for active participation in the management of schools in their areas.<sup>89</sup>

As a result of their liberal terms for inclusion of schools on the assisted list, one outstanding effect of the new grants-in-aid Regulations was an unprecedented immediate increase in the number of assisted schools particularly in the East (see *infra* p.267).

The three documents together show that it was the policy of the Government at this time (1948) to be in effective control and regulation of education. The new system of grants-in-aid was to be one of the main instruments of control and it was also to be used to ensure even development by giving more aid to poorer areas. It was also recognised that the mission schools derived the bulk of their financial support from the local communities which they served. For this reason, the Government decided to assign a definite place to this local support in the assessment of grants-in-aid and educational financing in general under the designation of "Assumed Local Contribution" (ALC). This was a formula by which the cost of education was shared in a fixed proportion between the Government and the local communities taking into consideration

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<sup>89</sup>Annual Reports 1948; p.6; and 1949; p. 13.

the economic resources of individual areas. The local contributions were to be raised in form of school fees, individual levy or by other convenient means or all combined.

Furthermore, the policy of partnership as redefined by the three documents was very similar to the one pursued in England. The Nigerian arrangement was clearly meant to give the Government sufficient powers of control and regulation, ensure full participation by local communities in financing and managing while leaving the Missions largely responsible for the day to day running of their schools including the appointment and dismissal of teachers. This policy is an example of the principle discussed earlier in Chapter One, that a Government can control and regulate a system of education without necessarily taking over its management. The Irish arrangement too is another example that incorporates some elements of this principle.

Under the new Ordinance, the Education Department was reorganised as shown in the chart below, (Fig. IX). The Director stationed in the Capital Territory of Lagos, was responsible for education throughout the country. He was assisted by six Deputies, three at the Headquarters and one posted to each of the then three Regions. Below them were seven Chief Inspectors, three for Women Education, another three for education in general and the seventh at the headquarters for Technical Education. One of each of the first two was posted to the Regions. Below them were Principals of Secondary Schools, Training Centres, Technical Institutes and Trade Centres, the Colony Education Officer, Senior Adult and Rural Education Officers. Next in rank were the Provincial Education Officers, Adult and Rural Education Officers, Lecturers and Technical Instructors and Accounting Officers.<sup>90</sup>

The Deputy Directors were responsible for all educational matters in their Regions. Their Chief Inspectors directed the overall inspection and supervision of all schools. They were assisted by the Education Officers both

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<sup>90</sup> Annual Report, 1950/51; p. 18.

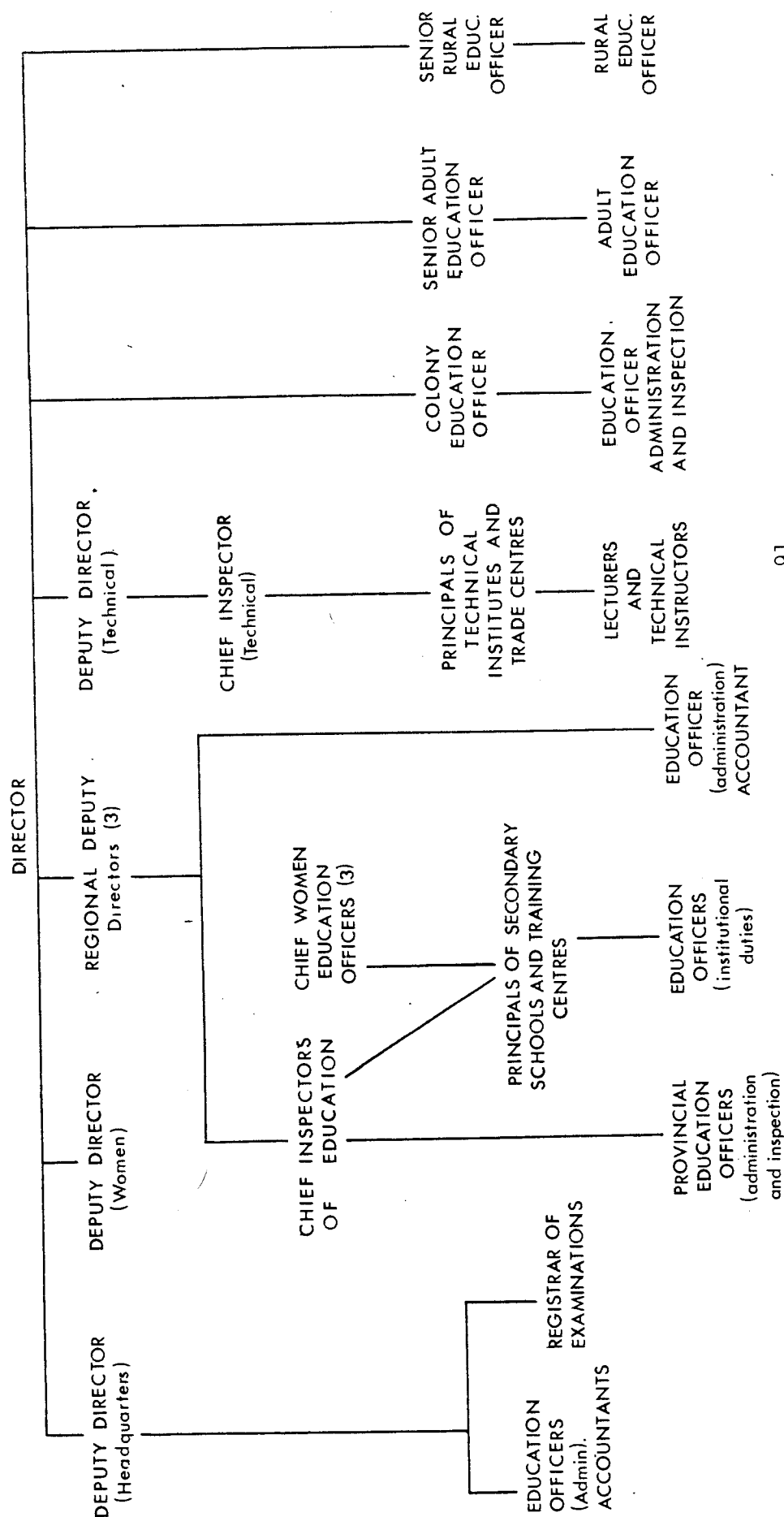


FIG. IX. ORGANISATION OF THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT 1950.

<sup>91</sup> Source:- Annual Report 1950/51. p.17.

at the Regional Headquarters and those posted to the Provinces. The latter was responsible for the training and supervision of the Visiting Teachers employed by the Government and those of the Native Administrations and the Missions.

The Department and its team of officials at all levels worked in collaboration with a chain of Advisory Boards and Committees appointed to look after different aspects of education. They included the Central and Regional Boards of Education, whose functions were discussed earlier (pp. 255-6), District Education Committees, the Conference of Secondary School Principals, Curriculum and Literature Committees, and other ad hoc bodies connected with education. The District Education Committees had no legal powers. They functioned only in advisory capacity. Provision was also made for the establishment of Local Education Authorities and Committees but as will be shown later, both of them could not be organised in the East until the end of the review period. Individual schools were also encouraged to establish their own Committees and Parent-Teacher Associations.<sup>92</sup>

It is necessary to record in great details the educational activities and the policies of the Colonial Administration immediately before the era of self-determination and independence so as to be able to see exactly what they were and compare them with the state of affairs and the policies pursued under the nationalist regime. Such a comparison is relevant bearing in mind that most of the conflicts of the later years between the Missions and the Government arose partly from attempts to implement some of the earlier policies such as that of greater Local Government participation in primary education, and changes in those of the Colonial Administration as will be shown later.

A year after the new Ordinance and Regulations came into force, the Deputy Director of Education for Eastern Nigeria, Mr. C.T. Quinn-Young, complained of the unsatisfactory nature of the administrative organisation of the Mission

<sup>92</sup>Annual Report, 1949; p. 18.

school system. In the East and unlike the West, local managers of schools were solely charged with the responsibility for administering large numbers of schools with no central or co-ordinated system of administration and control even within the same Mission. The East was also lagging behind the rest of the country in the establishment of Local Education Authorities. Only very few of them were functioning effectively and the result was that education administration was virtually the responsibility of individual mission school managers. In the North and West on the other hand, the system of Local Education Authorities and Committees was already well established.<sup>93</sup>

The complaint by the Deputy Director is important because in the 1950's Government attempt to involve the Local Government Councils in the management and control of primary schools in particular, met with stiff opposition from the missionary societies as we shall see in the next section. It is also significant that active local participation in education through the establishment of Local Education Authorities and Committees was provided for in the Education Ordinance of 1948, but could not be implemented before the nationalists came to power. This could not be done before then "in Ibo and Ibibio lands" because the Colonial Authorities believed that it was better to wait until the Local Governments Councils through which they could be more easily formed, became first well established. It was on account of this that until the introduction of responsible government in 1951 such Authorities and Committees virtually did not exist in the East.<sup>94</sup>

The difficulty in organising local administration in the East was attributed to the absence of established traditional rulers in the society. This was again unlike the North and the West where the institution of 'Emirs' and 'Obas' was long established. For instance, the House of Chiefs, the second

<sup>93</sup> Annual Report, 1948; p. 12.

<sup>94</sup> ibid., p. 13; see also Annual Reports, 1949, p. 34 and 1950/51, pp. 18-9.

legislative chamber which came into existence with the introduction of the 1951 Constitution had no difficulty in being constituted in the other two Regions as the recognised Chiefs were already there. But in the case of the East, there were only a handful of such traditional rulers. It meant creating them out of a society that had never really had them and this proved a difficult task for the Government. It was not until 1960 that the Eastern House of Chiefs met for the first time. Majority of its members were just appointed from among the community leaders "many of whom had no traditional status in the community over which they were given authority". This was by the same means as the Colonial Government had earlier employed in creating 'warrant chiefs' for the East.<sup>95</sup>

The reason for the above situation is to be found in the people's way of life discussed in Chapter Two. Their society is 'achievement oriented' and for this reason, there is great respect for achieved rather than ascribed status. People become leaders on the basis of individual merit rather than inherited privileges. The communities are highly individualistic and have never really had traditional rulers. Their acceptable system of social organisation is on the basis of council of elders, age grade cult the improvement unions, etc. They live under a communal system of government. It was this aspect of the people's social set-up that made it difficult for the Colonial Administration to establish not only the Local Education Authorities and Committees but also an effective Local Government system in the East before the introduction of responsible government. The importance of all this is to show that the conflict between the Missions and the Government which arose in part from the latter's attempt in the 1950's to implement the policy of Local Government participation in primary education had its origin in the structure and the values of the society.

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<sup>95</sup>See Harris, P.J., Local Government in Southern Nigeria. Cambridge University Press, 1957, pp. 3-4ff.

On educational finance, it was the policy of the Government from 1948 to contribute 55 per cent of the cost of primary education. But by 1950, it was already paying much more than its policy share especially in backward areas.<sup>96</sup> Its grants were providing "about two-thirds of the recurrent costs of teachers' salaries in assisted primary schools and 100 per cent in teacher training centres".<sup>97</sup> In the East, the problem of financing primary education at this time had become so acute that the ALC had to be raised throughout the Region. The increase generated an additional sum of £66,000 for the year. In effect, this meant that local communities there contributed more for primary education than in the other Regions of the country. At the same time in the East, the old policy of giving more grants to poorer areas was abandoned. From that date, grants were to be based on the cost of maintaining the existing educational facilities particularly, the salary bill for approved teachers and other grant-earning items.<sup>98</sup>

In continued effort to find additional sources of income for education in the Region, the Deputy Director submitted a Memorandum to the House of Assembly in July 1950 embodying suggestions on how this could be done. Following the Director's recommendations, the House appointed a Committee to study and report back on the problem. Its terms of reference was as follows:

"To investigate and provide statements and other data relating to the proposal to establish a system of rating for the assistance of primary education in the Eastern Provinces; to consider such a proposal in relation to the existing system of grants-in-aid, and to make suggestions for the administration of the proposed rate".<sup>99</sup>

The Committee recommended per capita education rate on all taxable adults to be collected by the Native Administrations. This was accepted by the House and implemented soon afterwards. But, it collapsed a few years

<sup>96</sup> Annual Report, 1949; p. 42.

<sup>97</sup> Annual Report, 1950/51; p.31.

<sup>98</sup> ibid; p.31.

<sup>99</sup> ibid; p. 33.



after it was introduced. There were three main reasons for the failure of education rating in Eastern Nigeria:

- (i) Inefficiency and lack of experience on the part of the then recently constituted Local Government Councils who were charged with the responsibility for collecting the rates;
- (ii) Poor machinery of collection and corrupt practices such as poor accounting techniques and embezzlement by the collectors;
- (iii) "Lack of confidence in the Council's staff, creating apathy and reluctance to pay any money into the hands of people whose reputation was assailable".<sup>100</sup>

Thus, the problem of finding enough money to finance the ever-growing demand for education in the Region remained unsolved and was inherited by the nationalist government in addition to the other problems discussed earlier.

During the period of complete colonial administration, the Region's problem of inadequate resources to finance its educational system was recognised and treated with sympathy by the authorities. In spite of the fact that the East was the poorest of the three component parts of the country as we shall see in the next section of the study, the Central Government made more generous grants to it in aid of education than the other two Regions. For instance, in the last three years before the assumption of power by the nationalists, the East received more grants for education than either the giant North, or the West. This is shown in the table below:

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<sup>100</sup> Dike Commission Report, pp. 8-9; see also Abernethy, D.B., op. cit., pp. 142-3.

See also Eastern Region, Nigeria - Annual Report of the Education Department, for the year 1956, Government Printer, Enugu, p.12.

Table XVII Central Government Grants-in-Aid of Education to the Three Regions of Nigeria: 1947-50<sup>101</sup>

| Financial Year | Northern<br>£ | Western<br>£ | Eastern<br>£ | Total<br>£ |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 1947/48        | 87,873        | 413,464      | 460,726      | 962,063    |
| 1948/49        | 155,400       | 441,278      | 584,900      | 1,291,578  |
| 1949/50        | 973,089       | 1,263,038    | 1,452,229    | 3,688,358  |

From the above figures, the East received 47.9, 45.3 and 39.4 per cent of the total expenditure on grants-in-aid for the three years respectively. In terms of size and population as we saw in Chapter Two, and the income derived from it by the Government as will be shown later, those proportions were much higher than what should have been its fair share. The logic was that the Region had more schools than the others as we saw earlier, and as a result, in 1949, it accounted for more than half of the teachers in the whole country as shown in Table XVIII below. It is to be recalled that the salary bill for teachers was the highest item of recurrent expenditure on the school system. It was therefore a question of giving greater assistance to a people who had largely through self-effort, established a greater number of educational institutions than the others as the Director argued at the eve of regionalization and the consequent loss of central revenue in aid of education in the East.<sup>102</sup> We will return to this point in the next Chapter. It is also important to mention here that the generous grants from the Central Government helped to stave off a break-down of the school system in the Region. But as soon as education was regionalized, its cost became far beyond the resources of the Eastern Nigerian Government as we shall see in the next section and this led to a great deal of difficulties and financial crisis, and, the situation in turn meant an additional stress on the partnership arrangement.

<sup>101</sup> Annual Reports, 1949; p.4; and 1949/50; pp. 38-9.

<sup>102</sup> See Annual Report, 1951/52; p. 18.

Table XVIII      Number of Teachers at Work in Nigeria, 1949<sup>103</sup>

| Type of School | Eastern Region | Western Region | Northern Region | Colony of Lagos | Total  |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------|
| Primary        | 18,612         | 12,312         | 4,189           | 2,099           | 37,212 |
| Secondary      | 722            | 399            | 116             | 198             | 1,435  |
| Grand Total    | 19,334         | 12,711         | 4,305           | 2,297           | 38,647 |

By 1950, the end of our survey period, there were more than 2,000 assisted primary schools in the East as compared with 270 two years earlier.<sup>104</sup> This was explained by the fact that the new Grants-in-Aid Regulations made it easier for more schools to be included on the assisted list. At the same time, it was reported that "a grant-earning school with reasonable enrolment is also a 'profit' earning school. Were enrolment near the maximum for those assisted schools there would be very substantial funds left over for improvement in building and equipment". On discovering this, the Government instructed the Provincial Education Officers to ensure that Regulation 5 of the Ordinance namely, that "the income of the school is applied solely to the purpose of the school" was strictly enforced.<sup>105</sup> Any funds left after the payment of teachers' salaries at the end of the year must actually be paid into a building fund or used to provide some needed new equipment. The situation was created by the more generous terms of the new Grants-in-Aid Regulations. The issue of making profits in schools is a very important element in the nationalization of schools. In later years, the situation appeared to have gone out of control. School Proprietors including the Missions were constantly accused of making huge profits and the Government argued that a substantial amount of public funds would be saved if the schools were taken over by the state. As we will be examining this

<sup>103</sup> Annual Report, 1949; p.19.

<sup>104</sup> Annual Report, 1949/50; p.56.

<sup>105</sup> *ibid*; p. 42.

and other criticisms of the partnership arrangement in the next section, suffice it to note that the allegation of profit making did not start during the period of responsible government and independence. The Colonial Administration had spotted it and taken measures to check it. To our judgement, this lends credence to the criticism.

### Summary:

In this chapter, attempt has been made to follow the rate of educational expansion in the East and some of the factors that influenced it from 1930 to 1950. On this we found that inspite of the financial difficulties caused by the economic depression and the Second World War, the period was one of accelerated rate of educational expansion. The reason for this irony was the people's belief that education was a commodity that did not fall in price. During the period too, teachers suffered cuts in salaries in different forms.

The Chapter also examined the system of administration and the sources of financing the Mission schools. On the first, our conclusion is that administration was highly fragmented and this constituted a great problem for a co-ordinated planning and supervision of the school system. On finance, the initial cost was borne by the Missions but later, education was substantially paid for by the local communities and later assisted by the Government when the school became grant-earning. The conclusion here is that the school system rightly belongs to the people.

The third section of the Chapter examined the relationship between the Missions and the Colonial Government in education. In this case, it was shown that for economic reasons and in keeping with the practice in England at the time, the policy was to provide education in partnership with the Missions as the agents of the local communities. The Government made grants

to deserving schools in return for its regulating and supervising them and prescribing the standards. The actual management was left largely in the hands of the Missions. There was no question of taking this away from them.

Finally, the last section examined the Government and education during the period and found that by 1950, the state had extended its powers of control to every aspect of the school system. It had also recognized the contribution made by the local communities and assigned a definite place to it in the new Grants-in-Aid Regulations. It was also its policy that the communities should become more involved in the management of their schools. All this together is intended to present a comprehensive picture of the partnership arrangement as it operated before the advent of responsible government in Eastern Nigeria. The purpose of this is to help us to understand the changes that took place in subsequent years and the effects they had on primary and secondary education in the Region.

In relation to general education in the East during the "Colonial Phase", 1847 to 1950 which is the topic of the two chapters that make up this section of the study, some other observations are relevant particularly, in relation to the Government. On a more general level, the policy of the British Imperial Government was "the administration of the Colonial Dependencies with the object of guiding and helping peoples not yet able to stand by themselves, to achieve self-government". In pursuit of this objective, education was regarded "not merely as the training of intelligence or the acquisition of the means of livelihood but also as the raising of the general level of the life of the whole people and the provision of adequate facilities for their development, physical, economic, intellectual and spiritual."<sup>106</sup> Seen in this light, the Imperial Government undertook the business of educating the people as an essential part of its duty although in the case of Eastern Nigeria, this was after the Missions had been in the field on their own for more than half a century.

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<sup>106</sup> Memorandum on Educational Policy in Nigeria; op. cit. p.3.

With particular reference to Nigeria as a whole, the history of British Education effort went through two distinct traditional stages as we saw in the case of Western Europe in Chapter One. The first lasted from 1882 to 1924 and the second, from 1925 to 1950. During the first period, education was confined largely to the care of the Missionary Societies. The second stage came when it was recognised that the state could not be indifferent to the education of its subjects as it also happened in Western Europe particularly in England. This second period followed soon after the visit of the Phelps-Stokes Commission in 1924. A year later, the Imperial Government in London issued a White Paper entitled Education Policy in British Tropical Africa (Cmd. 2374, 1925) which provided the guidelines for the first comprehensive Policy for Education in Nigeria issued in 1926.

From that date, the Colonial Administration pursued a policy of more active participation and co-operation between it and the Missions with the proviso that the "friendly association", much as it was to be greatly desired, was to be reviewed in accordance with "the spirit of the times".<sup>107</sup> It was also realized and emphasized that many Missionary Bodies with little experience in school management had established many primary schools, especially in the East, whose effective administration and control proved far beyond their scope. On the part of the Government at this time, there was no organised machinery through which the Missions could be advised and guided. There was also the growing enthusiasm among local communities to provide large sums of money for the establishment of schools for their children. In this regard, the Government adopted the policy that the local community desire for education and their willingness to pay for it should not be allowed to result in "wasteful overlapping, parochial rivalry and ill-digested schemes".<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> ibid; p.6.

<sup>108</sup> ibid; loc. cit.

The Government therefore decided to establish an effective machinery for advising, guiding and co-ordinating the efforts of both the Missionary Societies, and the local communities who were desirous of making practical contribution to the extension of facilities for education. The Eastern parts of Nigeria were at the forefront of this in the country. One of the measures taken to achieve this policy objective was the establishment of a less unwieldy Central Advisory Board of Education than the one that existed for the Colony and Protectorate of Southern Nigeria. Similar Boards were also constituted for the Eastern and the other two Groups of Provinces. The formulation of policy for education and the ultimate control of all its branches were the responsibility of the Central Government acting on the advice of the Department of Education and the Boards. This included the determining of the general policy, giving approval to the number and types of schools to be established, what they could teach and the qualifications of the teachers. The Department of Education, through its supervisory officers, performed the function of seeing that approved Government policy and regulations were adhered to by the schools.

On the Government financing of education before 1947, the social usefulness of a school to the community which it served was one of the main criteria for grants-in-aid. Another was the number of certificated teachers on its staff. Grants were made in respect of all such teachers whether in assisted or non-assisted schools. The Missions in co-operation with the local communities were assigned the responsibility of finding money for the salaries of all uncertificated teachers, maintenance of buildings and equipment. Before then, grants were made on the basis of efficiency and schools were classified as A, B, C and D depending on their degree of efficiency.<sup>109</sup>

But with the introduction of the new grants-in-aid system in 1948, the old ambiguities were eliminated and replaced with an easily understood formula. Grants were thence made on the basis of recognised expenses which

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<sup>109</sup>ibid; p.10.

included among other items, approved teachers' salaries, buildings, equipment and running costs. The spirit of local initiative and self-help was to be encouraged and the financing of education was made a shared responsibility between the Government and the local communities through the formula of the ALC. The local contributions were to be collected through the agency of the Missions to whom Government grants were also paid. The local communities were also to be encouraged and given powers for active participation in the management of the schools in their midst.

The Government also pursued the policy of giving religious education "a definite place in the life and work of the school". At the same time, parents were given the option of withdrawing their children "from all or any form of religious worship or instruction". This was similar to the 'conscience clause' in the case of religious instruction in schools in England and Wales. In matters of admission, no school was to discriminate against pupils on religious grounds.<sup>110</sup>

On the actual system of educational control, the Government gave financial assistance to the Missions in return for the right to supervise and inspect their schools, to formulate policies and prescribe standards. The argument was that "as the price of increased assistance, Government must require its policy to be carried out and its standards maintained while the societies must insist on maintaining the essential character of their schools".<sup>111</sup> This again was similar to one of the conditions for the 'aided schools' in England and Wales.

But in spite of all the measures taken by the Government, the school system remained essentially 'voluntary' with the Missions exercising a large measure of control. It was never the intention of the Colonial Administration

<sup>110</sup> ibid; pp. 49-50; and cf. the "Cowper-Temple Clause" in the English Education Act of 1870, in Maclure, J.S.; Educational Documents, England and Wales 1816 to the Present Day; op. cit. p. 98.

<sup>111</sup> Phillipson's Report; p. 42.



to change the above position altogether particularly by the fact a great deal of importance was attached to religious education in British Africa. This was clearly borne out by the policy of opening Government schools only in the areas where efficient mission schools were not yet available.<sup>112</sup> Again this policy was very similar to one of the provisions of the English Education Act of 1870 as we saw earlier in Chapter One. The overwhelming dominance of Mission schools in Southern Nigeria all through to about the end of the 'Colonial Phase' of its history as shown in Table XIX below, further support the point made above. It should also be recalled that in Great Britain itself, the idea of education as a state responsibility was not generally accepted until about the end of last century. All this together leads us to the conclusion that the educational policies pursued by the Colonial Government in Nigeria were derived from experiences, practices and the climate of opinion which prevailed at the time in the United Kingdom. In other words, the system of education introduced by the Missionaries and later supported and directed by the Colonial Authorities was similar to the one which they were acquainted with back home in Britain. That was as it ought to be. Both the Missionary Societies and the Government Officials could not have operated a system other than the one they knew of.

Table XIX Government, Native Administration and Mission Schools in Southern Nigeria<sup>a</sup>, 1947<sup>113</sup>

| Agency                               | Primary            |                      | Secondary       |                    |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
|                                      | No.                | Enrolment            | No.             | Enrolment          |
| Government and Native Administration | 183                | 26,040               | 7               | 1,304              |
| Missionary Societies                 | 4,801 <sup>b</sup> | 512,351 <sup>b</sup> | 36 <sup>c</sup> | 8,353 <sup>c</sup> |

(a) Private venture schools, (those not associated with any of the above three agencies) are not included.

<sup>112</sup>Annual Report 1949/50; p. 57.

<sup>113</sup>Calculated from Phillipson's Report, Appendix F pp. 106-7.

(b) These figures included the assisted and the unassisted Mission Schools.

(c) The figures were for assisted secondary schools only. Those for the unassisted ones are not available.

Finally, the Colonial Government pursued a policy aimed at making education practical and reconciling its recipients with their local environments. But the people for economic and social considerations, preferred the now criticized academic and theoretical type to the officially prescribed one. Parents and pupils did this in response to circumstances and pressures of the time. The anomalies of the system in this respect therefore, should not be blamed on the Colonial Administration, the Missionary Societies or the people themselves. The popular type of education was dictated strictly by circumstances which were beyond the control of any of the parties concerned.

On the deficit side, and based on the findings of the two chapters that make up this section of the study, at the time responsible government was introduced in 1951, education in Eastern Nigeria was faced with a number of serious problems. Various measures taken by the Colonial Administration solve them had not proved wholly successful largely on account of the structure and values of the society which made the problems not easily "susceptible to official control". They were inevitably inherited by the nationalists when they came to power, and the major ones among them can be summarized under seven main headings as shown below:

- (i) Demand for education and the establishment of schools far in excess of available resources;
- (ii) Fragmentation of the management of the school system into too many denominational units resulting in great difficulty for central and co-ordinated planning, control and supervision;
- (iii) Lack of uniform salary scales and conditions of service for all teachers;
- (iv) Lack of uniformity in school fees at both primary and secondary levels;
- (v) Profit making by standard grant-aided schools;

(vi) The predominance of the Missions in the management of a school system almost entirely financed by the Government and the local communities; and as a corollary.

(vii) Lack of adequate local participation in the management of the Schools.

In relation to the last problem it should be borne in mind that the measures aimed at rectifying the situation were originally initiated by the Colonial Government but could not be implemented before 1950 owing to the difficulty in organising effective Local Government Councils through whom they were to be enforced. This difficulty again, had its roots in the republican nature of the society discussed earlier in Chapter Two. The point about the last problem is that the conflict arising from attempts to implement the policy measures in later years as will be shown in the next section, was inevitable since if the Colonial Government had stayed on, it would equally have enforced them.

In concluding this section of the study therefore, we are to note that in addition to all the good work done by the Missionary Societies and the Colonial Government in aid of education in Eastern Nigeria, the Nationalist Government also inherited the problems outlined above. What it did about them, the policies it pursued, the reaction of the Missions and the effects of all these on education in general, are the topics discussed in the section that follows.

### SECTION THREE

THE PERIOD 1951-1965

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONSTITUTIONAL AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATION

#### 5.1 The Sociological Concept of Conflict

As we shall see later, a great part of the period 1951-65 was taken up by a series of conflicts in educational matters between the Missionary Societies and the Nationalist Government of Eastern Nigeria.

Sociologists are increasingly pointing out that "conflict in a structured form" plays an important role in changing human societies and in their functioning. For instance, Weber and Cohen have separately shown that where there are groups in a society each with its own different set of goals, there is bound to be 'conflict' in the attempt by each of them to achieve its own objectives. This happens when the efforts of one group are obstructed by those of another. Thus, and as Cohen puts it,

"Conflict exists where the goals of one group are pursued in such a way as to ensure that the goals of another group cannot be realised. Struggle occurs when action is taken to remove the source of conflict by reducing the power of another party, or by eliminating another party from the conflict situation".<sup>1</sup>

Again, in his analysis of the interaction between the Missionary Societies, the Colonial Government and the Nationalists in the development of formal education in Kenya, John Anderson observes that:

"Conflict becomes a struggle when one of the competing groups

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<sup>1</sup>Cohen, P.S., Modern Social Theory, Heinemann, London, 1970 pp. 184-5; See also Weber, M.; Basic Concepts in Sociology, (Translated by H.P. Sechev) Owen, London, 1962, pp. 85-9.

takes action to reduce the capacity or opportunity of the rival group to achieve its ends or to gain ascendancy over it".<sup>2</sup>

In applying the above sociological concept of conflict to the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the various Governments in educational matters in Eastern Nigeria, we will first recall as was shown in Chapter 4.3, that there was already some conflict of objectives between the Missions and the Colonial Administration. But all through the period, the conflict between the two was never allowed to develop into a 'struggle' because of the latter's policy of active co-operation with the former in educational matters. But with the assumption of political power by the Nationalists in the early 1950's, the status quo could not longer be sustained. Their policies, and their relationship with the Missionaries were so different that the old conflict assumed greater proportions and soon developed into open 'struggle' as the rest of this section will show.

On their part, the Missionary Societies wanted not only to be allowed to continue with the control and the management of their existing primary schools but also, to be given sufficient assistance from public funds for the establishment of new ones. It was mainly by their continued active participation in education that their objectives of winning more converts and maintaining effective influence on the old ones could be achieved. They would therefore resist the attempts by the Nationalist Government to reduce their share of educational management and control in the Region.

On the other hand, the policy of the Nationalist Government was that all new primary schools were to be established and managed only by the Local Government Councils. It also planned eventually to set up Provincial

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<sup>2</sup>Anderson, J., The Struggle for the School, op. cit. p.1.

Education Boards to take over the management of all such schools. The Government was also concerned with directing and exercising more effective control over the development of education in general and through it, to attain its own political and economic objectives which were somewhat different from those of the Missionary Societies.

The Regional Government therefore took measures "to reduce the capacity or the opportunity" of the Missions as the dominant group in the education enterprise, and their use of it for proselytizing purposes. Swift measures were taken and the attempt to implement them immediately changed the conflict of objectives into a struggle between Church and State and this continued in various forms until and after the school system was nationalised more than twenty years later. The background to, and the measures themselves, and the actual conflicts and struggles for the period 1951-65, are the topics of the chapters that make up this section of the investigation. In the mean time, we shall first examine the implications of the 1951 Federal Constitution for education.

## 5.2 The Implications of the 1951 Constitution for Primary and Secondary Education

As was shown in the 'Background to the Problem' section of this investigation, the Constitution of 1951 did not fully incorporate the essential features of Federalism. That was left for the Constitution of 1954 to accomplish. We are concerned here with the main provisions of the earlier one to the extent that they were related to education.

The Constitution of 1951 as was mentioned before, marked the beginning of responsible government throughout the country. It provided for Regional Legislatures with powers to enact laws within their areas of jurisdiction on social services including education. The Governor in Lagos, was however, vested with the power to:

"Object to any Regional Bill on the grounds that, inter alia, it is inconsistent with the general interests of Nigeria".<sup>3</sup>

Secondly, a Central Minister of Social Services (Education, Public Health and Welfare) was appointed and his areas of responsibility were stated as:

- (a) Initiating policy discussions in the Central Council of Ministers; and
- (b) Introducing all subjects within his portfolio and answering questions affecting them in the House of Representatives.

The first holder of the Office was Shettima Kashim, MBE.

One of the flaws of the Constitution was that although education was classified as a regional service, it was to be financed for the following four-year-period by the Central Government. Again, the appointment of a Central Minister in-charge of among other services, education, would pre-suppose that there was going to be continued common

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<sup>3</sup>Annual Report 1951/52. p. 15.



educational policy for the whole country. But on the contrary, the Regions were made autonomous in all matters related to primary and secondary education. This was the parting of the ways between them in this respect. Each of them soon embarked on different educational policies as were decided upon by its political leaders. It was after this point that some of the educational problems outlined in the summary for the last section of this study, began to explode in the case of the Eastern Region.

Another important implication of the new Constitution for education was the provision that the allocation of annual revenues to the Regions for their services was to be on the principle of proportionate derivation.<sup>4</sup> The East was the poorest of the three Regions but at that time, the cost of its social services was already far in excess of the revenue allocated to it by the Central Government under the new principle.

This raised the question of how to reconcile the existing system of grants-in-aid to schools with the new formula for revenue allocation on the basis of derivation. Education was still to be financed by the Central Government, but revenue was no longer to be allocated on the basis of identified need. Instead, it was to be done on the basis of the proportion of the national revenue that was derived from each Region. In the circumstances, because of the poorer economy of the East, the Central Government grants to schools there would be severely curtailed despite the fact that under the old arrangement, the existing schools were already in acute financial difficulty.

All the above problems were created by historical processes that had taken place before the adoption of the new Constitution. One of them was that under the Richards Constitution of 1947, each of the Regional Houses of Assembly functioned merely as "a housekeeper working within allotted sums" and not as "a householder possessing complete financial autonomy".

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<sup>4</sup> ibid., p. 17.

How to resolve the problems, particularly as they affected the East, proved rather difficult. The leaders of the other two Regions saw them as internal to the East and therefore, considered that they should not be resolved from the Centre.

The Central Director of Education disagreed with the above view. In a report submitted to the Government in Lagos on the effects of the new Constitution on education in Eastern Nigeria prior to its adoption on 1st October 1951, he argued that in view of the fact that the "Voluntary educational system has reached an advanced stage of development over wide areas" in Eastern Region, it would be indefensible to slow down or destroy the educational achievements of the people of the Region on account of conditions imposed by the principle of allocating revenue on proportionate derivation.

Furthermore, the Director pointed out that grants-in-aid should be seen as a necessary state response to local efforts. In the United Kingdom, for instance, enterprising Local Authorities in the field of education, "naturally attract greater amounts of financial assistance from central funds". The Director concluded:

"It seems to me almost inconceivable that the Government should allow the educational achievements of the past to suffer possibly irreparable damage by denying to a particular Region the benefits which that achievement attracts under a national scheme, or that it should require a particular part of the country to halt in the educational race partly because under different constitutional arrangements it made good progress".<sup>5</sup>

The above argument clearly suggests that as a result of the more rapid development of education in the East prior to 1951 and the liberal financial support which it attracted from the Central Government, the

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<sup>5</sup> ibid., p. 18.

achievements of the past were likely to suffer some serious set-back under the new constitutional arrangements.

However, in order to adjust the financial position to regionalization, there was to be a transitional period. The new system of revenue allocation was not to come into effect until after October, 1954. This "period of grace" was designed to give the new Regions time to find their feet and prepare for the new system of educational financing. It was expected that by that date, the process of regionalization, including the sharing of the assets of the Central Marketing Boards, would have been completed. Until that date therefore, the Central Government would continue to finance education by the same formula as was used in the past. This major concession was very helpful to the Regions, particularly the East.

Before the responsibility for general education was finally transferred to the Regions in 1954, the Central Government advised that the overall policy of the new Regional Authorities should be to co-operate actively with the Native Authorities and the Missionary Societies in educational matters. The last two bodies should be accorded the status of local community agents as was the case before internal self-government. The ultimate aim of all the Regional Governments should be to convert the Native Authorities into Local Education Authorities. The transition must not be sudden. The Regions were advised to make it a gradual process and to endeavour to engender good relationship between the new LEA's and the Missionary Societies in educational matters.

To illustrate the need for continued active cooperation between the Regional Governments on the one hand, and the Native Authorities and the Missionary Societies on the other, the new Federal Government pointed out that for the financial year 1951/52, the country as a whole spent an estimated total of £5,006,105 on education. Of this amount, the Government provided £2,925,145 or 58.4 per cent; the Missionary Societies raised no less than £1,600,000 or 32 per cent from fees, levies, contributions and

donations by the local communities; and the Native Authorities spent £480,960 or 9.6 per cent.<sup>6</sup>

The figures were quoted to show that the cost of education was jointly provided by the three main agencies concerned. It was therefore the advice of the Federal Government that the new Regional Authorities should continue to encourage and support the partnership arrangement.

The £2,925,145 spent on education by the Central Government was shared out among the different parts of the country as shown below:<sup>7</sup>

| Region                         |     |     | £         |
|--------------------------------|-----|-----|-----------|
| Colony of Lagos (Headquarters) |     |     | 383,270   |
| Northern                       | ... | ... | 717,045   |
| Western                        | ... | ... | 820,480   |
| Eastern                        | ... | ... | 1,004,350 |
| Total                          |     |     | 2,925,145 |

Consistent with the Director's argument, the above figures show that although the East was the poorest of the three Regions, its greater number of educational institutions through voluntary efforts, attracted the highest grant from the Central Government. The Region got as much as 34.3 per cent of the total expenditure.

Under the Phillipson Grant-in-Aid Regulations 1948, the Central Government was paying 70 per cent of the cost of education in the Eastern and Western Regions, and less in the North and the Colony of Lagos. But, for the country as a whole, its contribution was slightly below 60 per cent. The arrangement was based on the varying rates of educational development in the different parts of the country.

<sup>6</sup>Annual Report 1952/53. p.20.

<sup>7</sup>Annual Report 1951/52. p. 29.

As a part of the decision to introduce the new system of educational financing gradually over a period of years, the Federal Government decided that between 1952 and 1954, its contribution of 70 per cent towards the cost of education in the East and the West, would be progressively reduced to 55 per cent leaving 45 per cent to be found from local sources. The aim here was to ensure that when the Regional Government took over the proportion formerly contributed by the Centre, their task would be to find only 55 per cent of the cost and not the 70 per cent which the Central Authority was paying. This was another measure to make the burden particularly in the case of the East, less onerous.<sup>8</sup>

On universal primary education, the Federal Government advised that it should be one of the essential aims of all the Regional Governments but not necessarily the most urgent one. The emphasis initially should be on developing a balanced system of education and not concentrating on one level to the neglect of the others.

It was the view of the Federal Government that the economy of the country was not yet in a position to provide the necessary funds for an all out universal primary education scheme. But even if any Region thought that it had the funds to embark on such a scheme, it should also be reminded that there were other more pressing social problems such as: poor communication facilities, adverse climatic and topographical conditions, low standard of living, etc.

Although universal primary education was desirable, the statement went on, the Regional authorities should refrain from contemplating its immediate introduction. Instead, the foundations for its eventual attainment should be laid by increasing, within the available resources, the provision for secondary education and teacher training.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> ibid., p. 25.

<sup>9</sup> ibid., pp. 25-6.

The advice to the new Regional Authorities was similar to a father restating the family traditions and making his experiences available to his children who have recently come of age and about to leave home to start life on their own. Much as much an exercise may be useful and obligatory on all responsible parents, on the other hand, the use the children may make of it in their new found freedom from parental control, depends on their individual values, needs and circumstances.

Applying the above concept to the Nigerian context, the Federal Government in Lagos did what was expected of it as the head of the family. On the other hand, its pronouncements would appear to have been adhered to for as long as it continued to control the purse from which education was financed in the Regions. This was particularly so in the cases of the West and the East. But as soon as their independence was made complete with the sharing of the assets of the Central Marketing Boards, and the attainment of complete independence in social services by both Regions in 1954, all the suggestions by Lagos appeared to have been set aside. After that date, the two Regional Governments embarked on educational expansion programmes far beyond the capacity of the economy to support.

With the adoption of the new Constitution in 1951 and the interim financial arrangement for education, the former unitary Education Department was divided into three parallel Departments, one in each Region. At the head of each of them was a Regional Director responsible not to the Central Government but to the Regional Executive Council. General education was thence to be treated as a regional subject.

The former Central Director was made more or less an adviser to the Federal Government in Lagos on educational matters. He retained his membership of the Central Executive Council. In addition, he was assigned

with the responsibility of exercising administrative functions over certain specialised units and institutions. These included the Kings and the Queens Colleges in Lagos, the Government Clerical Training School, Oshogbo, the University College, Ibadan, the Nigerian College of Arts, Science and Technology and other similar institutions by the Federal Government. He was also to represent the overall interest of Nigeria in all educational matters. Finally, his designation was changed from Central Director to Inspector General of Education. He was assisted by two Chief Inspectors and four advisers for Women, Technical, Rural and Adult Education respectively.<sup>10</sup>

In the Region, the Office of Deputy Director was replaced by that of Director of Education. He was assisted by a Deputy Director - a post created to replace the former Office of Chief Inspector. In addition, there were three Inspectors of Education and one Chief Women's Education Officer. The Inspectors were respectively assigned the responsibility for Primary, Secondary and Teacher Training. The new Education Departments were organised as shown in Figure X below.

The Central Board of Education was reconstituted to reflect the new political arrangements. Also reconstituted were the Regional Boards and one for the Colony and Territory of Lagos. Later, the last Board was abolished when Lagos was merged with the Western Region.

Thus, under the 1951 Constitution, three autonomous Education Departments were established and at the head of each was a Regional Minister of Education. As was stated earlier, the Federal Ministry of Education was headed by a member of the Council of Ministers charged with, among other responsibilities, the co-ordination of educational activities throughout the country and the proceedings of the Central Board and its Committees.

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<sup>10</sup> ibid., pp. 19-20.

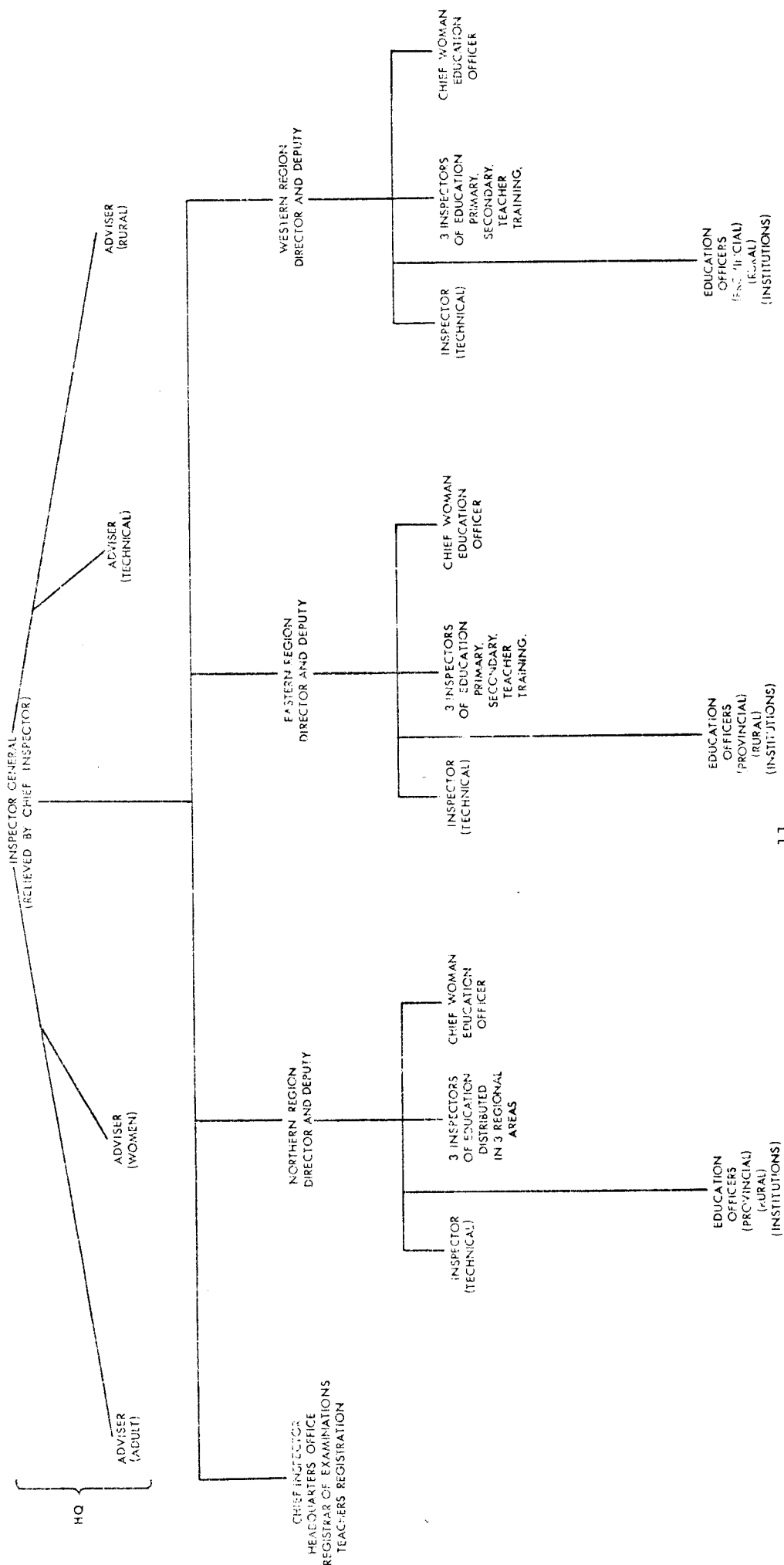


FIG. X. NIGERIA : EDUCATION DEPARTMENT STAFF ORGANISATION, 1951  
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 Ibid. p. 23.



Under the new constitutional arrangement, it was the duty of the Regional Ministers of Education to determine educational policies and programmes and to get them implemented by the Directors. Although each Region was free to pursue its own separate policy, on the other hand, this had to be within the revenue allocated to it for education by the Federal Government which retained the responsibility for disbursing the statutory grants-in-aid for the whole country until after 1954.<sup>12</sup> This central financing of education until that date, could be said to be the only restriction on the powers of the Regions in educational matters after the adoption of the 1951 Federal Constitution.

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<sup>12</sup>Annual Report 1952/53. p. 6.

### 5.3 Background to the Educational Policy of the Nationalists

The new class of educated Nigerians who assumed political power in the Eastern Region in 1951 were trained mostly in the United States of America and a few of them in the United Kingdom. While they were abroad, they had conceived the notion that education was 'the key to progress' and unlimited in its potentialities. For example, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe whose political party, the NCNC ruled Eastern Nigeria from 1951 until the outbreak of the national crisis, and who himself was the Premier of the Region from 1954 to 1959, was a typical representative of the new class of educated elite. As a student in the United States, part of a letter he wrote to Dr. T.J. Jones, Director, Phelps-Stokes on 16th June, 1928 read as follows:

"I pray that the Lord may help me so that I may return to Africa with the golden fleece, and propagate from the Zambezi to the Nile, yea! from the Nile to the Congo, the new learning, the recent philosophy of education,<sup>13</sup> that education itself is life and not necessary a preparation for life".<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Azikiwe who return to Nigeria in 1937 was among the first batch of the educated new class of elite. From the 1930's, they went round the country spreading the new philosophy and encouraging every village to increase its educational activities. All this lent an additional impetus to the already popular demand for education, particularly in the Southern parts of the country.

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<sup>13</sup>The recent philosophy of Education' was by John Dewey (1859-1952), the eminent American educator, philosopher and psychologist. See Dykhuize, George, The Life and Mind of John Dewey, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973.

<sup>14</sup>Quoted in Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education op. cit. p. 118.

Another outstanding person among the new leaders was Dr. Akanu Ibiam. He was a member of the Legislative Council in Lagos and later, that of the Eastern House of Assembly and finally served as the Governor of the Region from 1961-66. He had in 1946 and again in 1949, tabled a motion in the Legislative Council calling for free and compulsory primary education in the country. On the second occasion, an amended version of the motion was passed. It called on the Native Authorities to levy education rates in order to give primary education to the greatest possible number of children in their respective areas of authority.<sup>15</sup>

The Nationalist commitment to education as an instrument of progress is illustrated by the established of private secondary schools by some of their members soon after their return to Nigeria. Some of such schools established during the Colonial Period were: Enitonia High School, Port Harcourt (1932) by Rev. R.L. Potts-Johnson; Aggrey Memorial College, Arochukwu (1932) by Alvan Ikoku; and the West African People's Institute, Calabar (1938) by Professor Eyo Ita. Others included New Bethel College, Onitsha (1942); Our Lady's High School, Onitsha (1943); Merchants of Light College, Oba (1946); Metropolitan College, Onitsha (1946); Emmanuel College, Owerri (1947) and Okongwu Memorial Grammar School, Nwei (1949).<sup>16</sup> All these schools were founded in Eastern Nigeria by members of the elite class most of whom were the first Ministers of State and the Parliamentarians.

There were two principal reasons why some of the nationalists went into secondary education on their return to Nigeria from the United States. First, they were "the outcasts of the Colonial Civil Service" which did not recognise their chain of degrees from the United States. As an alternative employment, they went into secondary education which

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<sup>15</sup> Nigeria: Legislative Council Debates, Government Printer, Lagos, 1949, pp. 673-84.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Education: Directory of Post-Primary Institutions, Official Document No. 6 of 1971, Government Printer, Enugu, pp. 2-10.

was very much in demand and consequently, could earn them a decent living. Second, the nationalists regarded the establishment of secondary schools as a practical demonstration of their advocacy for greater educational opportunities for the people.

All the above nationalist views and educational activities are intended to illustrate the point that the people who assumed political power in Eastern Nigeria in 1951, were mostly those who, before that date, had advocated greater educational facilities for the people. In their campaign for mass support for their demand for political independence for Nigeria, one of their promises was that they would introduce universal primary education which was defined as, "education provided for every child who wishes to take advantage of it",<sup>17</sup> when they came to power. Such a promise was bound to impress a people who were known to be very thirsty for education. In this way, the nationalists used education as one of the instruments in their effort to win mass support.

Another significant factor was the relationship between the nationalists and the Christian Missionaries who controlled and managed majority of the schools in existence. In the first place, the former accused the latter of having fostered the idea:

"that nothing in the structure of African social life is worth preserving; that everything, indeed, is bad and corrupt, and must be pulled down - tribal systems, communal tenure and marriage laws".<sup>18</sup>

The militant nationalists also resented the Missionaries on account of the belief that they (the Missionaries) were

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<sup>17</sup> Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for Introduction of Universal Primary Education, Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1953 Government Printer, Lagos, pp. 1-2.

<sup>18</sup> Coleman, J.S.; Nigeria; Background to Nationalism. University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971, p. 105.

"the front troops of the Government to soften the hearts of the people and while the people look at the Cross white men gather the riches of the land".<sup>19</sup>

It was also the view of the nationalists that the Missionary and the Colonial Administrator were one and the same people. This argument was supported with the point that the British Monarch was and is the head of the Anglican Church and also the constitutional head of the Government. The identification of the Missionary with the Colonial Administrator was further reinforced by one of the clauses in the original treaties between the traditional rulers in Nigeria and the British Crown. It read as follows:

"All white Ministers of the Christian Religion shall be permitted to exercise their calling within the territories of the aforesaid King and Chiefs, who hereby guarantee to them full protection".<sup>20</sup>

In addition, the Missionaries shared the same "colour, culture and living standards" with the Colonial Civil servants. On the above grounds the nationalists saw the Missionaries as an alternative power to Colonialism.

The nationalist view of the Missionary as outlined above was further strengthened when:

"certain missionaries openly condemned 'Zikist nationalism' in their sermons; this approach facilitated the nationalist effort to spread the notion that missionaries were opposed to African freedom".<sup>21</sup>

This incident appeared to have convinced many Nigerian Christians that the

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<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, p. 108.

<sup>20</sup> Treaty with the King and Chiefs of Opobo (Eastern Nigeria), 1884 quoted in *ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

Missionaries were in collusion with the Colonial Government and that the two were agreed in subordinating the African to an inferior social, economic, and political status.<sup>22</sup>

Ironically, the early Missionaries themselves were at the same time, being blamed by the Colonial Administrators as being responsible for the agitation by the nationalists for political independence. The latter argued that the type of education which the former gave to the people made it possible for the nationalists to challenge the Colonial Authority. The Missionaries then in the country were said to have shared this view with the Colonial Administrators. According to Mr. E.O.Enemo, one of the early university graduates trained by the Anglican Mission in Eastern Nigeria,

"I once had a chat with an English clergyman who shared the views of the colonial administrator. He blamed the agitation for freedom in the colonies on the Missionaries who, instead of presenting the natives with the HOE and the BIBLE, gave them also literary education."<sup>23</sup>

Views such as this were expressed at this time to support the claim that the Missionary and the Administrator were one and the same people.

It was further argued by the nationalists that in mission schools, education for economic and political development was being put second to evangelization. On the other hand, the argument went on, the needs of the country required education to be geared towards economic, manpower and political development. Furthermore, under the partnership arrangement, educational facilities were said to be unevenly distributed. It would therefore be the policy of a government controlled by the nationalists,

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<sup>22</sup> ibid., pp. 109-110.

<sup>23</sup> Enemo, E.O., "Missionary Endeavour: Protestants View" in The Nsukka Seminar op. cit. Appendix E, p. 4.

"to disperse opportunities for education extensively in order to destroy once and for all the notion that certain areas are earmarked and favoured for the purpose of educational development and advancement".<sup>24</sup>

The policy statement went on to say that an enlightened citizenry would more easily make for harmonious political integration of the tribal groups in Eastern Nigeria.<sup>25</sup> Education was therefore to be used for the achievement of ethnic harmony.

All the above circumstances taken together led the political leaders to resent "the overwhelming role that the missionary bodies played in education". In view of their new objectives for education, they regarded such a role as an anachronism. Furthermore, their resentment

"was often deepened by the fact that many of the managers of schools, particularly Catholic schools, were expatriate missionaries. Fears, genuine or hypocritical, were expressed that colonial influences would last while schools were controlled by mission managers".<sup>26</sup>

In addition, the different missionary agencies insisted that the children of their members must attend only the schools managed by them. This led to the establishment of more schools in some areas "than the numbers of school-going children justified". The inter-denominational

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<sup>24</sup> Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy Statement on Self-Government, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1957 Government Printer, Enugu, p.6.

<sup>25</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>26</sup> O'Connell, J., "The State and the Organisation of Elementary Education in Nigeria: 1954-1960" in Weiler, H.N. (ed.), Education and Politics in Nigeria, op. cit. p. 121.

rivalry often led to quarrels which "broke the harmony of communities as mission bodies competed with one another to establish or to control new schools".<sup>27</sup>

The political leaders seized on the duplication of facilities brought about by the inter-denominational rivalries, and the damage done to the unity of local communities by the missionary squabbles "to assert their own authority and to leave as little as possible outside their own control",<sup>28</sup> as will be shown in subsequent chapters. Greater State control of education was seen as a cure to the ills of the partnership arrangement.

In fact, while the Colonial Administrators held the Missionaries responsible for the nationalist agitation for political independence, the nationalists, on the other hand, accused them of having provided the type of education that destroyed the pride of the people in their indigenous culture and made them rebels against their traditional values. The accusation went on to say that in mission schools, the children were given the type of education which "perpetuated a subservient attitude toward the colonial rulers and white men in general".<sup>29</sup> It was for this reason that some of the more radical nationalists "went so far as to oppose mission education of any sort".<sup>30</sup>

When, therefore, the Nationalists came to power, they made it clear

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<sup>27</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>28</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>29</sup> Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. p. 170.

<sup>30</sup> ibid., loc. cit.



that they were not happy with the existing system of education and that it was their policy to change it. This view was expressed by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe in a presidential address to the annual convention of his party, the NCNC in 1954. He said among other things:

"We are not happy the way our education is administered.

While we realise the great contributions made by those who have operated this important department of State in the past, yet we have decided to take positive measures towards working out a new educational programme in the future".<sup>31</sup>

The mood of the new leaders in Eastern Nigeria in respect of education as outlined above, was similar to that of their counterparts in the Western Region. For instance, in 1952, Chief S.O. Awokoya, the Minister of Education there was quoted as saying that:

"Educational development is imperative and urgent.

It must be treated as a national emergency, second only to war. It must move with the momentum of a revolution."<sup>32</sup>

It was for this reason that his Government must introduce Universal Primary Education Scheme by 1st January, 1955. Later on, and still in the same mood, Chief Awokoya described the UPE as "a gilt-edged security against the hazards and difficulties of the coming years".<sup>33</sup> This view was similar to the Eastern leaders' concept of education as an instrument of ethnic unity and harmony, economic development and social justice in equalising opportunities.

Another important factor in the emphasis on education by the new

<sup>31</sup> Zik, A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe. Cambridge University Press, London, 1961. pp. 26-7.

<sup>32</sup> Western Region of Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates 1952. Government Printer, Ibadan, 1952, pp. 463-70.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit., p. 128.

rulers lay in the fact that the illiterate masses distrusted them and were very suspicious of their real intentions. It was widely known that the illiterate villager would prefer to be ruled by the whiteman in whose sense of justice he had complete confidence. His second choice would be to be ruled by the village head whom he knew very well would hardly go contrary to established traditional principles or commit "ihe ala na aso nsò". If the villager could not be ruled by either of the above two, he would unwillingly accept the educated elite who had very little in common with him.

On the other hand, the villager wanted education for his children as a means of escape from the poverty of the land. Neither his trusted whiteman nor the familiar village head could provide education on the same scale as the Nationalists had promised. When the new political leaders realised the distrust of the illiterate masses and the attractions the promise of universal education for their children had for them, they (the Nationalists) exploited the situation by repeating the promise of education for all with increasing frequency. One immediate objective was to win the confidence and the support of the illiterate masses for themselves and for their political party, the NCNC.

Again, the political scene in Eastern Nigeria was further complicated by the fact that some of the new leaders were known to be openly antagonistic towards the Colonial Civil Servants in the Region. One of the reasons for this was the fact that the frontline leaders - the Premier, Dr. Azikwe, the Minister of Education, Mr. I.U. Akpabio and the Minister of Finance, Mazi Mbonu Ojike were all American trained. They knew that the Colonial Officials had not much regard for their American chain of degrees because at that time, it was well known that the British

"considered the American educational system quite inferior to their own and disliked the independent outlook that schooling in the United States tended to produce".<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>ibid., p. 163.

In particular, the Minister of Education, Mr I.U. Akpabio had a personal grudge against the expatriate officials of the Education Department whom he eventually came to boss. They had earlier written numerous unfavourable reports against Ibibio State College while he was its Principal. On account of such reports, the College was refused approval for government grants-in-aid. The hostilities between the Officials and the new rulers reached its peak in 1955 when the majority of the party in power, the NCNC refused to approve expatriate allowances in the House of Assembly for some of the Permanent Secretaries.<sup>35</sup>

Also relevant to the educational events of the later years was the fact, and as we saw earlier in Chapter Three, that the largest Voluntary Agency, the RCM, did not embark on secondary education until nearly forty years after the Protestant Missions had been establishing such schools. One of the after-effects of this was that the RCM was the last to find qualified Nigerians for key posts in its hierarchy. The Mission had most of such posts occupied largely by Irish Priests. This was generally seen as unwillingness on the part of the RCM to accept the fact that the Colonial Era was drawing to an end. The position in the Mission was unlike that in the Protestant Denominations where most of the key posts had already been Nigerianised. It was partly on account of the foreign domination of the RCM that the political leaders would not consult the Catholic authorities on some of the major educational issues. That would have meant negotiating with the same Europeans whom they (the leaders) regarded as among their political opponents.

Another significant effect of the Catholic late start in the establishment of post-primary institutions lay in the fact that the political leaders, who were mostly the best educated in the land, were largely Protestants. For example, in the first Regional Cabinet formed in 1951,

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<sup>35</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

there was only one Catholic out of the twelve Ministers. The rest were Protestants. The second Government formed by Dr. Azikiwe in 1954, was also dominated by Protestants. On account of this, every Government action on education was rightly or wrongly seen as reflecting the Protestant, or non-Catholic point of view.<sup>36</sup>

On its part, the RCM authorities appeared to have adopted the attitude that any negotiations with, or appeal to the Protestant dominated Government was not likely to achieve much. Such an attitude can be explained by the religious differences between majority of the politicians and their expatriate top civil servants on one hand, and the Catholic authorities on the other; and also the racial differences between the political leaders and the majority of the Catholic Priests who were school managers.

Commenting on the above differences, David Abernethy notes that:

"The religious barrier operated even where the racial barrier did not, for most of the expatriates in the Department of Education were English Protestants. One high official who was an Ulsterman was suspected by many Irish priests of having nationalistic reasons for opposing the Roman Catholic Mission."<sup>37</sup>

Confronted with such barriers between the Mission and the policy makers.

"The best strategy for the Catholics in the event of conflict was, in fact, to bypass the party leadership and go directly to the people for support."<sup>38</sup>

This was possible and at times rewarding to the Mission, because a sizeable proportion of the NCNC members and supporters, and the voters in the Region were Catholics by religion and,

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<sup>36</sup>See ibid., p. 166.

<sup>37</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>38</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

"by mobilising popular support the mission could remind the NCNC leaders of their dependence on a large bloc of votes that might, on occasion be withheld".<sup>39</sup>

The effect of the composition of the Nationalist Government and its expatriate officials, and the great following which the RCM enjoyed among the populace, appears to have been that of making meaningful communication between the Mission and the Government rather difficult. In addition, the large membership of the church among the people seems to have tempted "the Catholics to engage in public controversy with the government".<sup>40</sup> Instances to illustrate such a tendency will be provided when we discuss the UPE scheme and the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the Government in Chapters Seven and Eight. It is against the above background that the recourse to public demonstrations and protest marches by Catholic women against some of the educational measures of the Government in later years, is to be understood and interpreted.

Furthermore, the mainstay of the Nigerian economy at this time was her agricultural products. The wealth of any of the three Regions depended largely on how much of these were derived from its territory. This was particularly the case after the country was regionalised. As was shown in Chapter Four, the problem of educational finance was particularly more acute in Eastern Nigeria even before regionalisation. The school system in the Region was financially maintained from two main sources. The first was the more enthusiastic demand for education by the people and their willingness to pay for it. The second was the generous grants from the Central Government on account of the Region's large number more schools established mainly through self-help and voluntary efforts. But with the complete regionalisation of the country, the system of central

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<sup>39</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>40</sup>ibid., pp. 166-7.

financing of education came to an end. Each Region was thence to generate its own funds for the support of its schools both primary and secondary.

Compared with the other two Regions, the East was the poorest. Her agriculture, the principal source of revenue to the Government, was not as well developed as in either the West or the North. The comparatively weaker financial position of the East may be illustrated by the sharing of the assets of the Nigerian Commodity Marketing Board in 1954, when the process of regionalisation was completed.

In the first place, the Board was established in 1940, and was charged with the responsibility for purchasing the cocoa-crop largely grown in the West, and disposing it in the best possible way. Later, palm produce largely from the East, and ground-nuts, the main agricultural product from the North, were included in the Board's areas of responsibility. In addition, it was also to stabilize the prices of these products.<sup>41</sup> In practice, the Board operated by paying less to the producers than it actually got from the world market. By this process, it accumulated large reserves which could be ploughed back to the farmers in the event of world market fluctuations.

Three years after the Constitution of 1951 was introduced, the Board was also regionalised in the same way as education and other social services. At this time, the Board was regarded as the main source of revenue for the Governments. In 1954 when it was regionalised, it had a reserve of £87 million which was shared among the three Regions on the basis of proportionate derivation. The Western Region got nearly half of that amount while the East came off with only £11.46 million. The total assets of the Board were shared among the Regions as shown in Table XX, below.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>41</sup> For further details on the Board and its activities, see Helleiner, G.K., Peasant Agriculture, Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 152-167.

<sup>42</sup> ibid., Table 39, p. 165.

Table XX Assets taken over by the Regional Marketing Boards from the Nigerian Commodity Marketing Board, 1954<sup>a</sup>

| Marketing Boards | West       | North      | East       | Total      |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
|                  | £          | £          | £          | £          |
| Cocoa            | 32,625,100 | 135,500    | 176,100    | 32,936,700 |
| Oil Palm Produce | 10,199,000 | 484,500    | 11,248,400 | 21,931,900 |
| Ground-nut       | -          | 24,722,600 | 39,600     | 24,762,200 |
| Cotton           | 73,000     | 7,309,200  | -          | 7,382,200  |
| Totals           | 42,897,100 | 32,651,800 | 11,464,100 | 87,013,000 |

(a) These figures exclude Southern Cameroons

The above figures show that by the time the process of regionalisation was completed in 1954, the East had the least reserve as compared with the other two Regions. Under the new system of financing education, the indication was that the Region would have some difficulty in finding the money to support its existing schools and other social services. It would also be difficult for it to embark on further expansion of facilities. The position of the Western Region was comparatively better. In addition to the huge amount it inherited from the Central Marketing Board, there was also its then booming cocoa enterprise.

The relative poorer financial position of the Eastern Nigeria Government as compared with those of the other two Regions, may be further illustrated by the annual revenues of the three Governments for the period 1952/53 - 1958/59. They were as shown in the table below.

Table XXI The Annual Revenues of the Three Regional Governments  
Of Nigeria 1952/53 - 1958/59 (£ thousands)<sup>43</sup>

| Region   | 1952/53 | 1953/54 | 1954/55  | 1955/56  | 1956/57  | 1957/58  | 1958/59  |
|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Western  | 6,337.1 | 7,931.5 | 10,764.1 | 14,303.1 | 16,431.2 | 16,340.0 | 19,624.8 |
| Northern | 7,355.6 | 8,286.4 | 8,551.4  | 11,816.1 | 16,248.0 | 17,507.0 | 18,715.0 |
| Eastern  | 5,072.0 | 5,761.3 | 5,883.6  | 6,703.4  | 12,888.2 | 13,429.0 | 12,002.3 |

The figures show that for the seven year period, the annual revenue of the East was the least. This was a reflection of its poorer economy and the financial position of its Government.

It is under the above political, religious, cultural and economic background that the developments in the field of education and the dispute over its management and control during the period 1951-65 are to be considered.

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<sup>43</sup> Adapted from Helleiner, G.K., Peasant Agriculture Government and Economic Growth in Nigeria. op. cit. Tables V-E-10-12, pp. 575-580.



## 5.4 The Official Nationalist Government Policy for Education

### 5.4.1 Policy for Education 1953

Although the NCNC party came to power in Eastern Nigeria in 1951, it was not until two years later, 1953, that its Government's first official policy paper on education was issued. However, in order that later developments may fall into their proper perspectives, it is necessary to mention here that the first Government of the Region by the party was led not by its National President, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe but by Professor Eyo Ita, its National Vice-President. He was an Easterner from Calabar. The first Minister of Education was Mr. R.I. Uzoma. At the time, Dr. Azikiwe was a member for Lagos in the Western Nigeria House of Assembly.

To return to the first policy paper, its stated aim was to use education as an instrument for better change in the social, economic, moral and political life of the people. The system of education in the past was said to have laid undue "emphasis upon mechanical rote learning with the result that it has not helped us to create all we need nor to realise the full extent of our ability and the resources of our country." It was, therefore, the policy of the Government to correct this anomaly and to "give the best education to the largest number, at the least possible cost".

"Best education" was defined as the type "that will teach the people to use their hands as well as their brains, to realise the resources of their country and be able to exploit them most economically, and to appreciate the true values in life". The new brand of education was intended to inspire the people with confidence in themselves and in their ability and to prepare them for the responsibilities of self-government when it was achieved.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>44</sup>Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for Education, Sessional Paper No. 6, of 1953. Government Printer, Enugu, p.1.

As it was outlined in the Sessional Paper, the policy of the Government on primary, secondary and some other related aspects of education was as follows:

#### I. Primary Education

The aim of the Government "is to provide universal primary education in the shortest possible time". It was not to be compulsory. Instead, compulsory education was "to be left to the various Local Government bodies to introduce as and when they feel they are ready to do so". At the same time the Government would "encourage Local Government bodies to introduce compulsory schemes of primary education as soon as they can provide their share of the necessary funds".<sup>45</sup>

The Regional Government would contribute 55 per cent of the cost of primary education, while the remaining 45 per cent would be raised from local sources. The existing system of education rating would be extended to parts of the Region where it had not already been introduced. The intention was to raise the whole of local community share of the education cost from rates so "that school fees in the basic primary schools will be abolished".<sup>46</sup>

In addition, as soon as enough trained teachers were produced and the "rating schemes properly established", primary education would be reduced from eight to six years duration. The Government would not be in a hurry in carrying out this policy because already,

"In Eastern Nigeria, the rate of expansion forced upon the Education Department by public demand has resulted in virtual collapse of all standards".<sup>47</sup>

The policy paper further pointed out that since the end of World

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<sup>45</sup> ibid., p.2.

<sup>46</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>47</sup> ibid., loc. cit. The quotation itself was culled from the Report of a British Government Study Group which visited British West Africa in 1951

War II, the rate of expansion had been so rapid that by 1953, the Region had about 4,000 primary schools with an enrolment of over 500,000 pupils, and a teaching force of approximately 19,000. The primary school population in the East was said to be more than half of the total for the whole country. The Government planned to tackle the problem of standards by steady expansion of teacher training facilities for both the present and the future needs of the schools particularly, for the period after the introduction of the Universal Primary Education scheme.<sup>48</sup>

## II. Secondary Education

The policy paper showed that as of 1953, there were 43 secondary grammar schools in the Region excluding the Southern Cameroons. Of that number, 40 were owned by Voluntary Agencies including private individuals and local communities. Only three were owned by the Government.<sup>49</sup> It was pointed out that there were many areas in the Region without secondary schools of any sort. It was therefore, the aim of the Government "that there should be an adequate distribution of secondary schools throughout the Region and with the expansion of primary education which we envisage, the demand for secondary schools will, it is expected, increase rapidly".<sup>50</sup> The aim was to have at least, one in each administrative division.

In areas where new secondary schools were needed, the Government would make grants to local communities which "show that they are prepared to contribute substantially towards their establishment". It was the policy of the Government that all secondary schools including those of the Voluntary Agencies should be "under responsible ownership". To this end, Boards of Governors should, in fact,

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<sup>48</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>49</sup> ibid., Appendix A, p. 8.

<sup>50</sup> ibid., p. 3.

"take over the control of all secondary schools and we regard it as of the utmost importance that there should be the fullest representation of the local communities on such Boards of Governors".<sup>51</sup>

Furthermore, part of the policy was to encourage secondary schools established by Africans, particularly those which were not yet approved, to attain the required standards as quickly as possible. In addition, financial help would be given to Local Government bodies and communities to establish new secondary schools in their areas. Such assistance would be on the basis of helping first "those who first helped themselves".<sup>52</sup>

Finally, the Sessional Paper stated that it was the intention of the Government "to introduce a unified Entrance Examination for secondary schools". This meant that individual institutions were not longer to conduct their own entrance examination as had been the practice hitherto. The scheme was intended to ensure even distribution of good candidates among all the schools.<sup>53</sup>

### III. Administration and Control

Here, the Sessional Paper stated that "Our policy will be that the control of primary education will become the responsibility of Local Government bodies". The actual responsible body would be "The Local Education Authority" working through a Local Education Committee. It was, therefore, the intention of the Government

"that the Local Education Authority will become responsible for the establishment of new schools and the financing of primary education and will be the body which disburses not only the rates provided by the local communities but also Grants-in-Aid from Government".<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>52</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>53</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>54</sup> ibid., pp. 5-6

On the other hand, it was not the intention of the Government "that the transfer of the control and management of primary schools to Local Authorities will result in making education purely secular".<sup>55</sup>

The new system of control and management would not be introduced precipitately.

The Government appreciated and was grateful to the long established Voluntary Agencies "for the wonderful educational work which they have done and are doing"; and its intention was that

"the control of primary education by Local Education Authorities will be brought about by the exercise of good-will on the part of all concerned".

The aim of the Government was to make the local communities think of all the schools in their areas as "our schools". They should not differentiate between schools along the lines of their ownership, i.e. those owned by the Voluntary Agencies and those by Government and Local Authorities.

Finally, the Government expressed the view that it would "seek the co-operation of the Voluntary Agencies"; and hoped that

"their representatives on Education Boards and Committees will give their assistance in the interests of education in the Region as a whole regardless of denominational interests".<sup>56</sup>

It was also the policy of the Government that the personnel engaged in educational activities at all levels "will be Africans". This policy was to be with immediate effect in relation to primary education where, after 1953:

"grants for expatriation and leave allowances and passage will no longer be paid for any expatriates teaching in primary schools".<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> ibid., p. 6.

<sup>56</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>57</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

#### IV. Religion

It was the intention of the Government that religious and moral education should "not be neglected". At the same time, it would enforce the regulations made under the Education Ordinance aimed at preventing religious discrimination. Still, if it was deemed necessary, the Government would

"introduce legislation to ensure that no child is penalised in any way on religious grounds, and that the religious atmosphere of all assisted schools is free and comfortable to all".

Finally, religious knowledge would no longer be a subject for entrance examination into secondary schools.<sup>58</sup>

#### V. The Education Department

In addition to the re-organisation of the Education Department at the national level discussed earlier in this chapter, some other changes were also effected at the regional level. One of them was the separation of the administrative staff from the Inspectorate Division. This was intended to afford more time to the Inspectors so that schools in the Region could be uniformly inspected.

The Department was re-organised into the following sections:

- (a) Administration
- (b) Inspectorate (i) Primary, (ii) Secondary, (iii) Teacher-Training
- (c) Finance
- (d) Women's Education
- (e) Technical Education
- (f) Adult Education

In the case of the Inspectorate Division, the view was expressed that the following additional section appeared to be necessary:

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<sup>58</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

- (a) Examinations and Syllabuses
- (b) Scholarships
- (c) Buildings and Architecture
- (d) Research.

The Buildings and Architecture Section was to advise Managers and Boards of Governors of schools in such areas as: building plans, materials, costs, etc. The Research section would be assigned the responsibility of investigating teaching materials and visual aids, practical psychology, effects of living conditions on children's minds and health, syllabuses, time-table, etc.<sup>59</sup> The overall organisation of the Department from 1953 was as shown in illustration XI below.

#### 5.4.2 The Policy for the Introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) 1953

Later in the year 1953, the Government issued another policy paper.<sup>60</sup> It was wholly devoted to proposals for the introduction of Universal Primary Education in the Region. The Paper defined the proposed scheme as "education provided for every child who wishes to take advantage of it".<sup>61</sup> It was to be limited in the first instance to "Junior Primary Education", which was defined as "education in the two Infant Classes and Standards I and II".

Attendance was not to be compulsory and the scheme was not to be described as "Free" because as the Paper put it, "there is no such thing as free education. Education of any kind has to be paid for, in one way or another". Instead the scheme was to be known as "education without the payment of fees".<sup>62</sup>

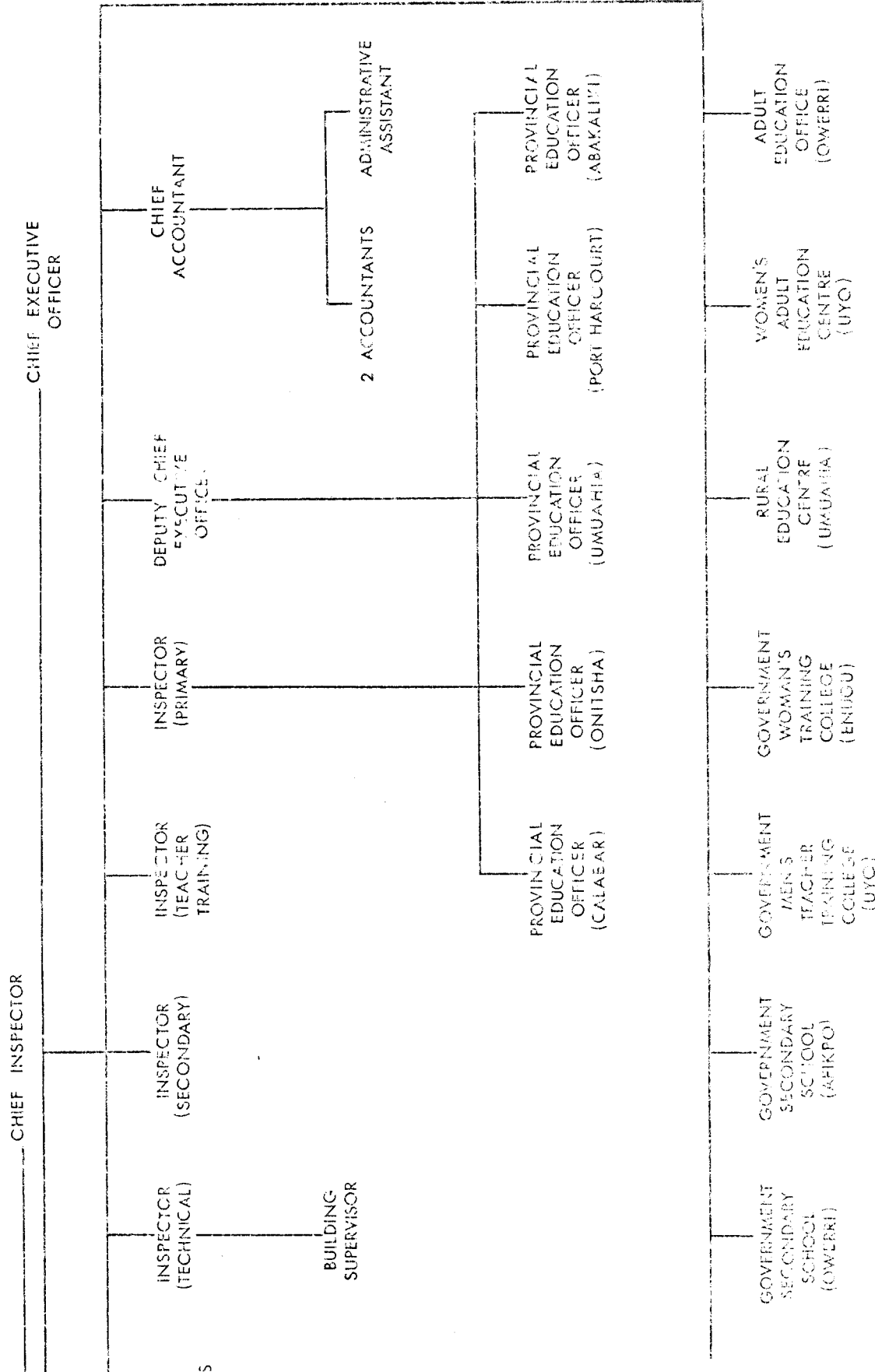
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<sup>59</sup>ibid., p. 7.

<sup>60</sup>Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for the Introduction of Universal Primary Education. Sessional Paper No. 9 of 1953. Government Printer, Enugu.

<sup>61</sup>ibid., p. 1.

<sup>62</sup>ibid., p.2.



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The Paper further pointed out that the scheme was being limited to "Junior Primary Education" because the Region could not afford full primary education of eight years without payment of fees. It provided figures to support this view. As of 1953, the four-year junior primary education course was costing the Region a total of £980,000 per annum.<sup>64</sup> The amount was being derived from three main sources as shown below:

|  |          |                  |
|--|----------|------------------|
| Government Grant-in-Aid                      | £350,000 | or 35.7 per cent |
| School Fees                                  | £380,000 | or 38.8 per cent |
| Voluntary Contributions<br>(through the ALC) | £250,000 | or 25.5 per cent |
| Total  | £980,000 | 100 per cent     |

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As of that date, the four-year junior primary classes had an enrolment of 382,000. The cost per child per annum was £2:12:0d excluding the cost of books. But, with the anticipated increase in enrolment to be followed by the launching of the scheme, the training and employment of more teachers and the building of new schools and maintaining the existing ones, it was estimated that the junior primary education would cost more than twice the 1953 expenditure. At that rate, the Region could not afford to extend the scheme beyond the first four classes in the first instance.<sup>65</sup>

The proposal to limit the scheme to junior primary education was similar to the directive by the Colonial Secretary following the abortive 1942 Ten-Year Development Plan for Education discussed in Chapter Four.

On the role of Local Government bodies in the proposed scheme, it was the policy of the Government that:

"Individual Local Government bodies must decide for themselves the priority of their requirements... they

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<sup>64</sup> Policy for the Introduction of Universal Primary Education, op.cit.p.2.

<sup>65</sup> ibid., pp. 3-7.

must be left to judge for themselves when to introduce a rate, what rate to introduce, and the most suitable time to contemplate the introduction of a system of Universal Junior Primary Education without payment of fees".

All the same, the Government hoped

"that Local Government bodies will realise the great importance which Government attaches to Universal Primary Education, and will co-operate in bringing it about and that, by the end of 1956, Universal Primary Education will have been introduced over the greater part of the Region ".<sup>66</sup>

The Sessional Paper listed a number of educational problems which the Local Government bodies "will have to consider and solve in the light of their local requirements"; and added that "it will be invidious to suggest the answers". Some of the problems were as outlined below:

1. "How can the Local Government body ensure that grants made to schools are applied to the purpose for which they were made?"

2. "Should the Local Government body take over existing schools managed by other bodies, and manage them itself, or should it continue to let the other bodies manage the schools with a degree of supervision from the Local Government body?"

3. "How should Voluntary Agencies and other interested parties be represented on the Education Committee?"<sup>67</sup>

Furthermore, it was the view of the Government that relations between "the Local Government with the Voluntary Agencies have to be considered". This was particularly so because of the allegation that

"some Missions practise religious discrimination, even

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<sup>66</sup> ibid., p. 8.

<sup>67</sup> ibid., p. 9.

though they receive grants on condition that they do not do so. One way of putting an end to this practice would be for the Local Government bodies to manage the schools themselves".<sup>68</sup>

The Paper went on to say that:

"In some villages there are two half-filled schools which could be managed much more economically if they were merged ... Again, one way out of the difficulty is to take over management" of the schools by the Local Government bodies although such a measure would have its problems.<sup>69</sup>

#### 5.4.3 Policy for Education 1954

A year later, 1954, another policy paper, the third in the series, was issued. Before outlining its essential features, we shall pause to bring the background to it into focus.

It will be recalled, as was pointed out earlier in this chapter, that the first nationalist Government in Eastern Nigeria was led not by Dr. Azikiwe, the national President of the NCNC but, by Professor Eyo Ita, its national Vice-President.

Under the 1951 Constitution, the party in power in each Region nominated the Region's representatives at the Central Council of Ministers in Lagos. Dr. Azikiwe's original intention was to serve on the Central Council of Ministers. In the hope that his party would win the 1951 elections into the Western House of Assembly, he contested the election and won as a member for Lagos in the Western House of Assembly. At this time, Lagos was administrated as a part of the Western Region. But in the overall election result, it was the Action Group that won the majority of the seats. This meant that the National President of the NCNC could not go to the centre

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<sup>68</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>69</sup> ibid., pp. 9-10.

as he had hoped. It also meant that Dr. Azikiwe was just an ordinary member of the Western House of Assembly and "at the best, the leader of a confused and unrecognised opposition".<sup>70</sup>

On the other hand, the other two National Presidents of the other two major political parties in the country, Alhaji Ahmadu Bello for the NPC, and Chief Obafemi Awolowo for the Action Group, were the Chief Ministers in their respective Regional Cabinets. In order to accord Dr. Azikiwe the same cabinet rank as his counterparts in the other two parties, the National Executive Committee of the NCNC decided that its National President should resign his membership of the Western House of Assembly and go over to the East to take over the leadership of the government there from Professor Eyo Ita.

By the above decision, the Eyo Ita Government was called upon to resign in order to make way for Dr. Azikiwe to form a new Regional Executive Council. The NCNC proposal was rejected by Professor Eyo Ita and the members of his Cabinet. They were supported by the Lieutenant Governor, Sir C.J. Pleass and the top British Civil Servants in the Region on the grounds that the proposal was "unconstitutional". After protracted arguments and debates, the other NCNC members of the Eastern House of Assembly tabled and passed a motion of no-confidence in the cabinet of Professor Eyo Ita. The House was dissolved in 1953 and fresh elections ordered.

Before the elections, Professor Eyo Ita and his colleagues were expelled from the NCNC and branded "The Sit-Tight Ministers". On the polling day, the NCNC was returned to power with increased majority and a new Government, headed by Dr. Azikiwe, was formed. All these events took place in 1953.<sup>71</sup>

During the political crisis, some of the measures by the ousted Eyo Ita Government including the two policy papers on education issued by it, were

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<sup>70</sup>Ezera, K. Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 157-8.

<sup>71</sup>See ibid., pp. 156-161, and Ikeotuonye, V.C., Zik of Africa, Macmillan Ltd., 1966. pp. 166-182.

discredited. It was for this reason that the new administration issued the third policy paper on education.<sup>72</sup> The essential features of the new policy were as outlined below.

### I. Education System

The 1954 Policy for Education rejected the original proposal of reducing the primary education course from eight to six years as was contained in the first policy paper of 1953. It was the view of the new Government that "Eight years Primary School course is necessary if Universal Primary Education is to be really effective", and added "we consider six years too short".<sup>73</sup>

Because many parents could not afford secondary education for their children, the new administration would introduce Secondary Modern Schools in which basic secondary school subjects would be taught. They would be of two-year duration and "will be much cheaper than the other types of secondary schools. The tuition fee was fixed at £7:10s per annum. In addition, the Government "expected that a great majority of these schools will be day schools; but that lodging provision will be made for pupils who may come from a distance".<sup>74</sup>

The new policy paper also rejected the proposal by the earlier one that in due course, the existing five-year secondary school duration would be increased to six years and thus making the system 6/6, i.e. six years of primary education and six years of secondary education. Instead, the new proposal was that:

"The primary/secondary system of education will be four years Junior Primary, and four years Senior Primary, five years Secondary Grammar or Technical or alternatively two years Secondary Modern".<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup>Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for Education, Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1954. Government Printer, Enugu.

<sup>73</sup>ibid., p. 2.

<sup>74</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>75</sup>ibid., p. 3.

## II Administration and Control

It was re-affirmed that the Regional Government would provide 55 per cent of the cost of primary education as grants-in-aid while the remaining 45 per cent was to be provided by the Local Government bodies.<sup>76</sup>

The important educational work which the Voluntary Agencies had done and were doing in the Region was acknowledged. It was, however, pointed out "They have been enabled to do this mainly by Government grants-in-aid and local contributions in the form of schools fees". In view of this, the policy paper went on:

"It is only fair therefore that Local Government bodies which are to shoulder much of the financial responsibilities of education should have more say in the affairs of existing institutions which they support and should take direct responsibility in establishing and running new educational institutions".<sup>77</sup>

In pursuit of the above policy, local communities would be adequately represented in the "governing bodies of all Voluntary Agency institutions which are supported by Government and Local Government bodies". The latter were "to have more say in the management of all Voluntary Agency institutions to which they give assistance". The Regional Government would take steps to bring all educational institutions "under adequate Government control".<sup>78</sup>

## III. Primary Education

It was the aim of the Government to introduce Universal Primary Education "into all parts of the Region." This objective was to be accomplished throughout the Region by December, 1956. Fees would be abolished, and the bulk of the money for the scheme "will come from Regional Government grants and education rating on 55:45 basis". The minimum primary school age

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<sup>76</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>77</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>78</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

was fixed at five years, and its duration would remain the existing eight years.<sup>79</sup>

#### IV. Secondary Education

It was the policy of the Government "to expand secondary education greatly". To this end, "Each county or division or municipality will be helped to have at least one secondary school established by the Local Government, the help being on say 50:50 basis". On the other hand, the first priority would be given to areas where no secondary schools were already in existence. In addition, the Government would give assistance to Local Government bodies, Voluntary Agencies and local communities to establish Secondary Modern Schools. Finally, the conduct of Teachers' Certificate Examinations would be taken over by the Ministry of Education, and no part of the examination was to be taken internally.

#### V Religion

The official policy here was that "religious and moral training should not be neglected or discouraged. At the same time, "No student should be denied admission into institutions supported by public funds or discriminated against on grounds of religion or denomination".<sup>80</sup>

#### 5.4.4 An Appraisal of the Three Policy Documents

Comparing the policy documents of the two Governments on education, the two by the Eyo Ita administration were more comprehensive, better prepared, more cautious and conservative in the targets of their expansion programmes than the aims and objectives enunciated in the Sessional Paper of 1954. For example, the former outlined the educational problems and indicated possible solution and left the final decision to be taken by individual Local Government bodies in the light of their needs and circumstances. Again, the proposed UPE scheme was definitely to be limited to Junior Primary classes in the first instance, and it was to have been introduced

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<sup>79</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>80</sup>ibid., p.4.

over a greater part of the Region by 1956. The paper did not say in the whole Region.

On the other hand, the Eyo Ita Government was quite definite on the policy of making primary education the responsibility of the Local Government bodies - including the disbursement of grants from the Regional Government and the local education rates for the schools, and the establishment of new primary institutions. The Government was also definite on encouraging the establishment of new secondary schools, and the existing ones by Africans.

In relation to the policy paper of 1954, its striking features were its vagueness on many important issues, and the more ambitious nature of its proposals. For example, it failed to specify whether the proposed UPE scheme would be extended to all the primary school classes or limited to the first four classes as was originally proposed. Its more ambitious nature may be illustrated by the point that while the aim of the Eyo Ita Government was that the scheme would have been introduced "into greater part of the Region" by 1956, the Azikiwe Government was categorical that the scheme would be introduced "into all parts of the Region" by December, 1956. It is possible that this might have been intended to win more popular support for the new Government and to portray the proposals by the ousted one as not going far enough.

Thirdly, whether or not an eight-year primary education course was more desirable than one of six-years duration, the former would definitely cost more in terms of money and time than the latter. On these grounds, the Azikiwe Government proposals could also be seen as being more ambitious.

But as we shall see in Chapter Eight, the fact that the same NCNC Government later went ahead to reduce the primary school course from eight to six years, would suggest that its rejection in 1954, was intended to achieve some political objectives possibly, as a part of the campaign to discredit the Eyo Ita government and its advisers.



It could also be argued that the 1954 decision to leave primary and secondary education at 8/5 years respectively was more ambitious than the Eyo Ita proposal of making it 6/6. At least, in terms of time, the former would have been one year longer than the latter.

Another feature of the 1954 policy document was the emphasis on the establishment of Modern Secondary Schools which were to be made cheap enough as to be within the means of many parents. Much as such a scheme would be desirable, and beneficial to many of the average parents in particular, it is doubtful that the Government had adequate financial resources to subsidize the schools in sufficient numbers at the rate of £7:10s as tuition fees per student per annum.

For example, in Western Nigeria where 270 such schools were already in existence in 1955,<sup>81</sup> the cost per student "range from tuition fees of £11 a year upwards with additional charges for such things as needlework materials".<sup>82</sup> In addition, and as of 1956, the Regional Government there was spending £68,250 per annum as grants to the Modern Secondary Schools.<sup>83</sup> It is, therefore, doubtful that the poorer Eastern Region with its higher school enrolment, could have afforded to operate the same level of education at a lower rate of tuition fees per student. On the other hand, the Modern Schools in general proved unpopular in the East, and had to be abolished in the end.

On the other hand, the educational policies of the two Governments in the East were in agreement in some other respects. For instance, they were both consistent on greater Local Government involvement in education, on assigning the responsibility for the establishment and running of new educational institutions to the Local Government bodies, and on greater Regional Government control of the entire school system. This was a

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<sup>81</sup>Western Region of Nigeria: Triennial Report on Education 1955-1958, Sessional Paper No. 11 of 1959 Government Printer, p. 15.

<sup>82</sup>ibid., p. 3.

<sup>83</sup>ibid., p. 16.

departure from the practice during the Colonial Period when Government control was extended mainly to the schools on the assisted list. As we shall see in Chapter Seven, the above three aspects of the nationalist policy for education proved highly controversial when attempts were made to implement them. They were the hub on which most of the major conflicts between Church and State in education revolved and also marked the beginning of the struggle between them.

Furthermore, the policy on Universal Primary Education was consistent with what the Nationalists had advocated before they came to power as was exemplified by Dr. Akanu Ibiam when he was a member of the Legislative Council in Lagos between 1946 and 1949. It should also be noted that he was a member of the Eyo Ita Cabinet.

Another area of agreement between the two Nationalist Governments was their dissatisfaction with the existing system of education. This was contained in the first Sessional Paper of 1953, and in Dr. Azikiwe's presidential address to the annual convention of his party in 1954 referred to earlier in this chapter.

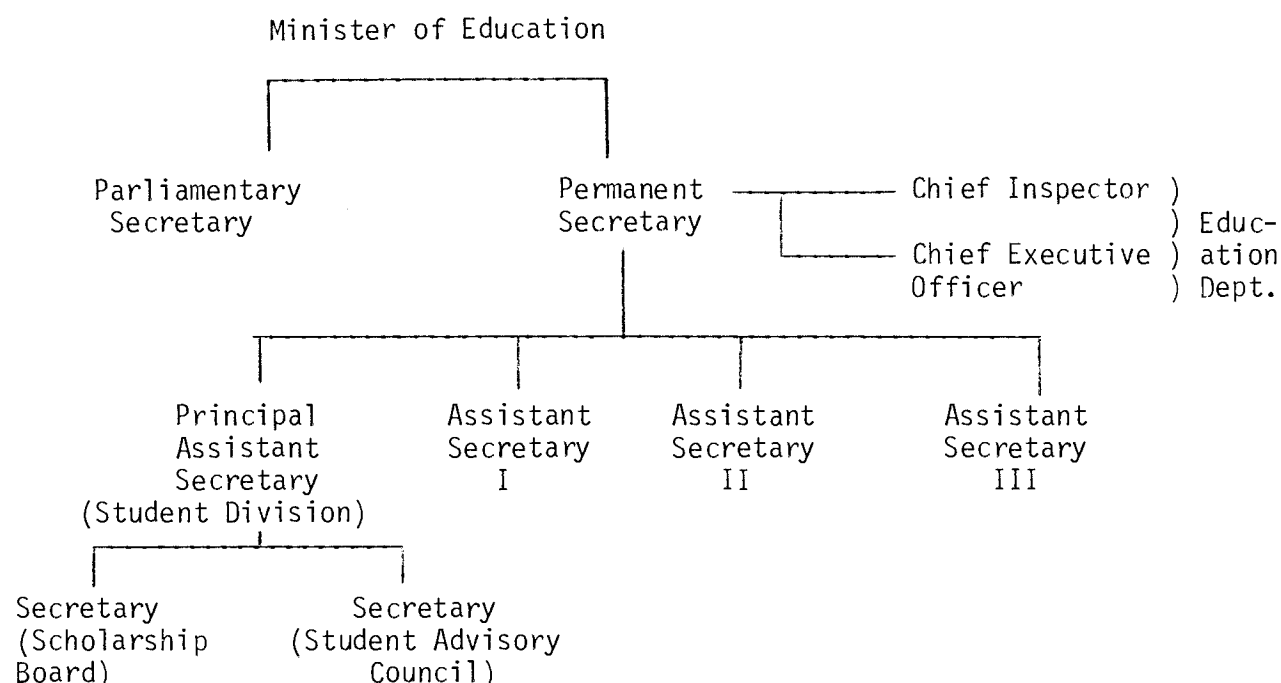
Finally, the two Governments were also agreed on the expansion of facilities for secondary education. But while the Eyo Ita administration would limit assistance for the establishment of new secondary schools to Local Government bodies and communities, the new Government led by Dr. Azikiwe would extend such assistance not only to those bodies but also, to the Voluntary Agencies for Secondary Modern Schools. To give assistance to the Voluntary Agencies to establish new schools appears inconsistent with the policy of concentrating future educational expansion programmes in the hands of Local Government bodies.

### 5.5 The Eastern Nigeria Education Law 1956

The first Education Law purely for Eastern Nigeria was enacted in 1956. It was from that date that the Education Ordinance of 1952 for the whole country ceased to apply to the Region. The West had enacted its own Regional Education Law in 1955 and the North a year later.<sup>84</sup>

Under the Law, the East Regional Ministry of Education was re-organised as shown in the diagram below.

Fig. XII      The Structure of the Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria 1956<sup>85</sup>



The essential provisions of the new Law were as outlined below:

#### I. Administration of Education

In the first place, the Minister was empowered to reconstitute the Regional Board of Education. Its main function was "to advise the Minister upon all such matters connected with educational policy, theory and practice as they think fit and upon any questions referred to them by him".

<sup>84</sup>Western Nigeria: Education Laws (Chap 34.) Government Printer, Ibadan, n.d. pp. 131-181.

<sup>85</sup>Annual Report, 1956, p. 49.

The Board was to be made up of twenty six members to be appointed by the Minister. The number of representatives for each of the agencies in education were as follows:<sup>86</sup>

|  |    |
|--|----|
| (a) Local Government Councils or Local Education Authorities                 | 12 |
| (b) The Christian Council of Nigeria (made up of the<br>Protestant Missions) | 4  |
| (c) The Roman Catholic Mission ... ..  | 4  |
| (d) Other Voluntary Agencies ... ..  | 2  |
| (e) Teacher Organisations ... ..   | 4  |
| Total  | 26 |

The legal provisions for the establishment of the Board deserves comments. In the first place, the Local Authorities which constituted an arm of the Government, had the highest single number of representatives - nearly 50 per cent of the unofficial membership. It may be pertinent to point out that this was so despite the fact that in 1956, the Local Authorities together had only 42 of the 5,066 primary, and 1 of the 71 secondary schools in the Region. Except 10 primary and 4 secondary schools owned directly by the Government, the rest were by the Voluntary Agencies. The composition of the Board, therefore, was not proportional to the number of schools controlled by the different agencies at the time. The composition of the Board therefore would appear to have reflected the future policy of the Government - assigning greater responsibility for primary education to the Local Government Councils.

Secondly, the actual members of the other bodies represented on the Board were not really appointed by them. What they did in practice was to nominate twice the number allowed them by the Law and to submit the names to the Minister. It was then left to him to choose any four

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<sup>86</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Education Handbook 1964, op.cit. pp. 12-13.

or two as the case might be, from such a list. He had the power to reject all the names and to call for fresh nominations. This would imply that those opposed to, or unacceptable to the Government might find it difficult to be appointed as members of the Board.

## II. General Provision Relating to Education

The system of education was as outlined in diagram XIII below. On education in general the Law provided that no school in the public system was to discriminate in the employment of teachers, or refuse admission to pupils on grounds of race, nationality and religion. All pupils were free to attend or abstain from any religious worship or instruction conducted in any school. If a parent requested that his child be excused from attendance to religious worship or instruction in any institution, "the pupil shall be excused from such attendance accordingly".<sup>87</sup> Whenever necessary, it was the duty of the proprietor to arrange for a pupil to attend religious worship outside the Institution according to the wishes of his parents. This was similar to the 'Conscience Clause' in the English system.

In consultation with the Board of Education, the Minister was empowered to make regulations in respect of:

- (i) the type of instruction to be given in all institutions;
- (ii) the admission, discipline, withdrawal and removal of pupils from schools;
- (iii) the examination of pupils in all assisted schools and the classification of the certificates awarded to them;
- (iv) the fees to be charged in all institutions; and
- (v) the furnishing of returns by the proprietors of schools and the time and the nature of such returns.

A breach of any of the regulations to be made by the Minister under any

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<sup>87</sup> ibid., p. 15.

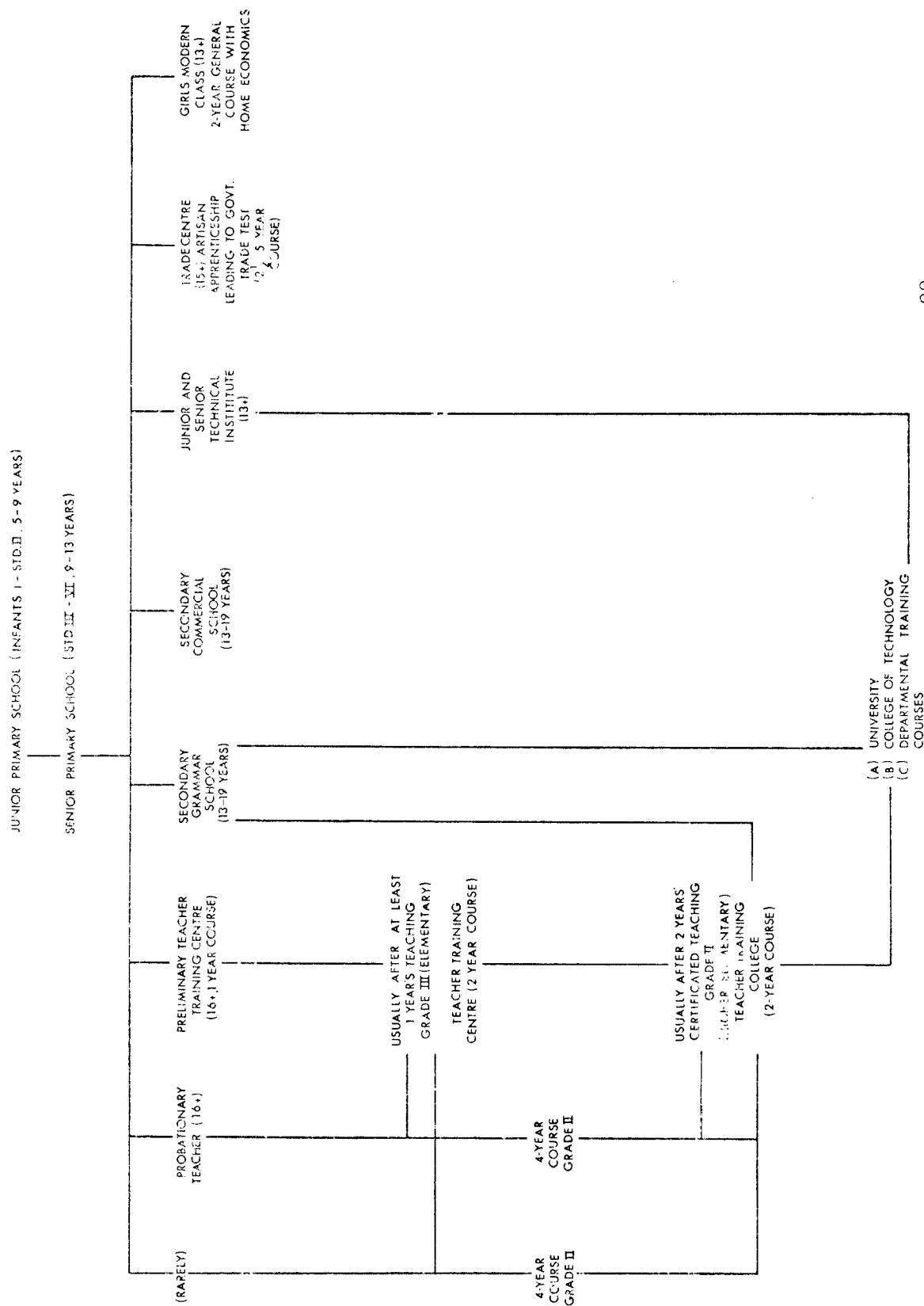


Fig. XIII THE STRUCTURE OF THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THE EASTERN REGION, NIGERIA, 1959.

of the above headings carried a penalty of up to £100 fine or imprisonment of up to six months.<sup>89</sup>

The above provisions would further illustrate the intentions of the Government of exercising greater control over the school system. More particularly, provisions (iii) and (iv) were departures from the practice during the Colonial Period. Then, at least from 1940, the Voluntary Agencies had been responsible for the conduct of the First School Leaving Certificate examinations for their schools. But even before the Law was enacted, the Government had already taken over the conduct of the examination with effect from 1954.

Secondly, there was no uniformity in the fees charged in both primary and secondary schools before the Nationalists came to power. There were several reasons why the Colonial Authorities could not legislate on it. But under provision (iv) above, the Minister was empowered to prescribe the fees to be charged in all assisted schools. All these measures should be seen in the light of the background to the nationalist policy for education.

### III. Opening and Closure of Schools and Institutions

(i) The Law empowered the Minister to establish schools and institutions on behalf of the Government of Eastern Nigeria. These were to be known as Government Schools.

(ii) Local Government Councils were also given power to establish schools and institutions within their areas of administrative authority.

(iii) No new school was to be established in any part of the Region "without the written approval of the Minister". It was also the duty of the Minister *inter alia*, to prescribe "the conditions to be fulfilled in respect of the opening of any school or institution including the time before which such a school or an institution shall be opened, and

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<sup>89</sup> ibid., p. 16.

provisions as to the land, premises, buildings and equipment of the proposed school or institution, the number and type of class". He could also close down any school if he was satisfied that its existence was not in the best interest or education or the people served.

The proprietor of any school or institution so closed could appeal in writing to the Governor-in-Council within three months after the school was ordered to close. Any person who established or opened any school other than in accordance with the procedure laid down by the Law was guilty of an offence punishable on conviction, by a fine of up to £100<sup>90</sup> or imprisonment of up to six months.

It is to be noted that under the Education Ordinance 1948, the power on permission to open a new school or to close an unsatisfactory old one was jointly exercised by the Regional Deputy Director and Board of Education. Appeals against any such decisions were to be made to the Regional Board of Education in the first instance and if necessary, later to the central Board, (see Chapter 4.4). But under the Education Law 1956, such powers were entirely vested in the Governor-in-Council and the Minister to the exclusion of the Board.

Furthermore, while the old Board had a majority of Voluntary Agency representatives with both advisory and executive functions in opening and closing of schools, in the new one appointed by the Minister, majority of its members were the representatives of the Local Government Councils and the Ministry of Education, and had only advisory functions in the areas of educational policies and matters referred to it by the Minister. In a way, the composition and functions of the new Board amounted to a reduction in the powers of the Voluntary Agencies to influence policies.

#### IV. Educational Finance

Under regulations to be made by the Governor-in-Council, the

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<sup>90</sup> ibid., pp. 16-19.



Minister was empowered to make "grants of money or make loans to any Local Education Authority in respect of schools or institutions or for any other educational purpose within its area of Authority, and such grants may be in respect of schools or institutions or educational services provided either by the Local Government Council or by a Voluntary Agency". Such grants could also be made separately and directly to the Voluntary Agencies and to the Local Education Authorities by the Minister.

The provision that the Minister could make grants to the Voluntary Agencies through the Local Government Councils is worthy of note. It is another reflection of the Government policy of strengthening the position of the Local Government bodies in primary education to the gradual reduction of the influence of the Missionary Societies. It was also a departure from the practice during the Colonial Period when grants were made directly to the Missions for their assisted schools.

Acting also in accordance with regulations made by the Governor-in-Council, the Minister was further empowered to make grants "for the payment of retiring benefits, gratuities or allowances to certificated teachers who are not in the employment of the Government".<sup>91</sup>

The last provision was important because hitherto, there was no centrally organised pension scheme for the Voluntary Agency teachers. Each Missionary Society made its own separate arrangement none of which was comparable with the conditions enjoyed by the civil servants. For a long time, this issue remained a major area of dispute between the teachers' unions and the Voluntary Agencies. The provision of government grant for teachers' retiring benefits was therefore, the beginning of the long process of harmonizing teachers' conditions of service with those of direct Government employees. This problem was not completely settled until 1974. We shall return to it later, in Chapter Ten.

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<sup>91</sup> ibid., p. 20.

### V. Inspection of Schools and Institutions

The Minister or any person authorised by him was empowered to enter and inspect any school or institution "at any reasonable time". The Manager or any person in charge of the school must produce for inspection, "any books or records kept in connection with the school or institution, and shall furnish any information or particulars which the Minister, Inspector or other person may demand with regard to the care and tuition of the pupils, the names and qualifications of the staff and generally with regard to the management of the school or institutions."<sup>92</sup>

It was an offence for a manager or head of a school to refuse to produce any of the records on demand or to give false information in respect of any aspect of the school work. On conviction, such an offence carried a maximum penalty of a fine of £100.

Under the Education Ordinance 1948, the Regional Director had power to inspect all assisted schools and not the unassisted ones. The main difference between the two Laws in this respect was the power of the Minister to inspect all schools in the system.

### VI. Registration of Teachers

The Law provided for a public officer of the Ministry to be appointed by the Minister to act as the Registrar of Teachers. His duty was defined as that of maintaining "a register of teachers containing the names and classification of all teachers authorised to teach in any school in the Region, together with any further particulars prescribed to be included in the Register by regulations" to be made from time to time by the Minister.<sup>93</sup>

On the advice of the Board of Education, the Minister could refuse the registration of any person if he was satisfied that the applicant was "not a fit and proper person to be a teacher". A person who contravened

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<sup>92</sup> ibid., pp. 20-1.

<sup>93</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

any of the provisions of this section of the Law was guilty of an offence and on conviction was liable to a fine of £50 "and, on a second or subsequent conviction, imprisonment for six months or a fine of fifty pounds or both".<sup>94</sup>

This section of the Law would further illustrate the policy of the Government to extend its control of the school system to every aspect of it. Before self-government, for example, there had been no provision for an uncertificated teacher to be registered with the Government; only those who had been trained were at that time required to do so.

The nationalist reform could also be seen as an improvement on the old policy as it would enable the Government to keep a comprehensive record of all teachers in the system and their qualifications. Under the new policy too, many unqualified persons become registered as teachers. This was the inevitable result of the schools expanding faster than teacher training.

#### VII. Teachers' Disciplinary Council

A Teacher's Disciplinary Council was to be appointed by the Minister as soon as the Law became operative. It was to consist of a Chairman and four other members. A public officer of the Ministry was to be appointed by the Minister to act as its secretary.

The duty of the Council was "to inquire into all cases in which it is alleged that a teacher registered under the provisions of this Law other than a public officer has been convicted of felony or misdemeanour or has been guilty of professional misconduct". All such allegations were to be made in the first instance to the Ministry and if the Minister was satisfied that they were well-founded, he would refer them to the Council for necessary action.

The Council was to meet at least twice a year. The name of any teacher found guilty by the Council was to be removed from the Register.

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<sup>94</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

Such a teacher could appeal to the High Court whose decision was final and binding on all concerned.<sup>95</sup>

There was no provision similar to the above in the Education Law 1948. Instead, the discipline of teachers was left in the hands of their employers, the Voluntary Agencies, and there was no uniformity in disciplinary matters among the different Missionary Societies. But under the Education Law 1956, the responsibility for the discipline of teachers was taken over by the Government inspite of the view that they were not its direct employees.

From the point of the teachers themselves however, the new policy on discipline would be a check against their being arbitrarily treated by the Missionary Societies. If the objectives of the Law were achieved, it would make for uniformity in disciplinary matters within the profession.

#### VIII. Records and Books

Every public institution was bound under the Law to keep the books and records listed below, and for the person in-charge of the school to produce them on demand by an Inspector or Supervisor:

- (a) a register of admissions, progress and withdrawals;
- (b) a register of attendance and fees;
- (c) a log book;
- (d) a cash book showing every item of receipt and expenditure;
- (e) a copy of the Education Law 1956 and all the regulations made thereunder and any amendments thereto;
- (f) a timetable approved by the Education Department which must be permanently and conspicuously exhibited in the principal classrooms;
- (g) weekly diaries of literary and practical work and teachers' working notes of at least one lesson per day;

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<sup>95</sup> ibid., pp. 22-4.

- (h) a visitors' book;
- (i) a corporal punishment book; and
- (j) a record of progress on which promotion in Elementary and Secondary classes had been based.<sup>96</sup>

Failure to keep any of the above records and books was an offence punishable on conviction by a fine of £20 "and to an additional fine of two pounds in respect of each and every day during which such offence continues".<sup>97</sup>

We have endeavoured to bring out the more essential provisions of the Education Law 1956 for two main reasons: one, to be able to compare them with those in force before the Nationalists came to power; and two, to enable us to have an overall picture of the intentions of the new administration as reflected by its first Education Law intended to back up its policies.

From the essential provisions of the Education Law 1956, very little would seem to have been left to the discretion or under the control of the Voluntary Agencies contrary to what was the practice before the period of self-government. Under the Law, almost every aspect of the school system was to be directed and regulated by the Minister and his officials. Even such details as admission of pupils and students, marking of registers, school holidays, punishment of pupils and students, accommodation in classrooms and school visits by their managers and supervisors<sup>98</sup> were brought under regulations to be made by the Minister and supervised by the officials of the Ministry.

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<sup>96</sup> ibid., pp. 30-1.

<sup>97</sup> ibid., p. 33.

<sup>98</sup> See ibid., pp. 30-3 and 55.

### 5.6 The Development of the School System 1951-56

As was the case before the introduction of responsible government in Nigeria, the rate of educational development continued to be faster in the Eastern Region than in any of the other parts of the Federation. For example, in 1952, the East had 51.5 per cent of the country's total primary school enrolment, and approximately 46 per cent of its teachers. It also had the highest pupil/teacher ratio as compared with the other two Regions (see Table XXII below).

Table XXII. Primary School Enrolment and Teachers in Nigeria 1952.<sup>99</sup>

| Region   | Enrolment            | No. of Teachers | Pupil/Teacher Ratio |
|----------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Eastern  | 552,000 <sup>a</sup> | 18,949          | 29:1                |
| Western  | 398,100 <sup>a</sup> | 17,261          | 23:1                |
| Northern | 122,145 <sup>a</sup> | 4,991           | 25:1                |
| Nigeria  | 1,072,245            | 41,201          | 26:1                |

(a) These figures were said to be 'approximate enrolments'.

The higher enrolment and the greater number of teachers in the East were also reflected in the Central Government's grants-in-aid of primary education to the Regions during the year. The figures for the financial year 1952/3<sup>100</sup> were as follows:

| Region          | Grant (£) |
|-----------------|-----------|
| Eastern ... ..  | 795,575   |
| Western ... ..  | 640,000   |
| Northern ... .. | 212,557   |

<sup>99</sup> Adapted from Federal Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1952/53. pp. 11 and 17

<sup>100</sup> Annual Report 1952/3, p. 14.

The Annual Report of the Education Department for the year also pointed out that the Easterner's spirit of rivalry and competition had continued unabated. The cases of Awka and Onitsha Divisions were used to illustrate this. In both places as in others, it was reported that many towns and villages had embarked on replacing their "mud-wall and mat-roof school buildings" with permanent and well built structures. According to the Report, this new trend was often motivated by the desire of the town or village "to erect a building worthy of it, and which could rival those of its neighbour". The same spirit had also given "an impetus to sending more children to schools".<sup>101</sup>

For the period 1953-55 the number of schools, their enrolments and the average number of pupils per school were as shown below:

Table XXIII Primary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1953-55<sup>102</sup>

| Year | No. of Schools | Enrolment | Average Pupil to School |
|------|----------------|-----------|-------------------------|
| 1953 | 3,656          | 572,705   | 158:1                   |
| 1954 | 3,987          | 664,707   | 168:1                   |
| 1955 | 4,309          | 742,542   | 172:1                   |

According to the Government regulation at the time, an average school, one stream of 35 pupils all through, should have a minimum enrolment of 280.<sup>103</sup> But, the above average pupil/school enrolments would suggest that many of the schools were under-populated. If so, it was then likely that there were more schools than were actually needed in terms of enrolment. In a way, this could be seen as evidence in support of the often repeated criticism that under the partnership arrangement, inter-denominational and village rivalries

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<sup>101</sup> ibid., p. 18.

<sup>102</sup> Self Government in the Eastern Region Part II Data and Statistics. Official Document No. 1 of 1958. Government Printer, Enugu, pp. 61-7.

<sup>103</sup> See Phillipson's Report, op. cit. p. 143.

resulted in the establishment of more schools than were actually needed or the available resources could support. We shall, however, look for further evidence either way in relation to this criticism in the subsequent chapters before reaching a conclusion one way or the other. The above indication is not sufficient in itself for a definite conclusion.

When it is recalled that the number of primary schools in the Eastern Region in 1950 was given as 5,136, the figure of 3,656 in the above table for 1953, shows that the number had sharply declined in-between the two dates, and started rising again thereafter. The initial decline could possibly be explained by the earlier directive by the Central Government that the Missionary Societies should close down or merge their unviable schools. All the same, the decline was so steep that one may wonder if the figures were really accurate. Whatever may have happened, the table shows steady growth in number and enrolment for the three-year period.

The first five years of nationalist rule, 1951-56, were a period of preparation and re-adjustment. On the whole, and in the field of education in particular, things were allowed to continue virtually in the same way as they had been prior to 1951. It was not until after the passage of the Eastern Nigeria Education Law 1956 that the nationalist government policy for education started to have significant impact on the school system, and the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the Regional Government in educational matters. As of that date, the ownership, number and enrolment of primary and secondary schools in the Region were as shown in Table XXIV below.



Table XXIV Ownership, Number and Enrolment of Primary and Secondary Schools in Eastern Nigeria, 1956.<sup>104</sup>

| Ownership           | Primary        |           | Secondary      |           |
|---------------------|----------------|-----------|----------------|-----------|
|                     | No. of Schools | Enrolment | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
| Government          | 10             | 2,860     | 4              | 653       |
| Local Authority     | 42             | 11,038    | 2              | 180       |
| Voluntary (Aided)   | 2,653          | 610,940   | 42             | 9,544     |
| Voluntary (Unaided) | 2,361          | 150,306   | 23             | 2,415     |
| Totals              | 5,066          | 775,144   | 71             | 12,972    |

It is to be noted from the above table that in 1956, the Voluntary Agencies controlled 99 per cent of the primary schools in the Region and 98.2 per cent of their enrolment. At the secondary level, they controlled 91.5 per cent of the number of schools and 92.2 per cent of their enrolment. These figures show that as of that date, the Voluntary Agencies were in virtual monopoly of primary and secondary education in Eastern Nigeria.

One of the aims of the nationalists was to break this virtual monopoly by getting the Regional Government and the local authorities more involved in the ownership, management and the control of the schools. The trend of educational development under the nationalist policies and laws, their effects and the reaction of the major agencies are the topics discussed in the next three chapters of this study.

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<sup>104</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Annual Report 1956, p. 28.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SCENE, AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION, 1957-1965.

#### Introduction

On the surface, the political development in Nigeria as a whole, and the general economic scene in the East in particular, 1957-65, may not seem to be directly linked up with the relationship between Church and Government in education and the actual development of the school system. But, in the final analysis, politics and economics are invariably the most important influences on the policies of government and so closely affect the development, management, control and curriculum of education. It is on that assumption that this chapter begins with the general political and economic setting against which the development of the school system took place during the period, 1957-65.

The general political and economic background was reinforced by more closely related events taking place in Eastern Nigeria at the time. The more important among them were: (i) the traditional rivalry between the Yorubas of the West and the Ibos of the East through their tribal unions and later, the two political parties, the Action Group and the NCNC which respectively ruled the two regions; (ii) the unfriendly relationship between the NCNC leaders in the East on one hand, and the expatriate civil servants and missionaries on the other; and (iii) the crises within the NCNC party and Government in the East which started in 1955, and later led to a commission of inquiry appointed by Her Majesty's Government in 1956 to investigate allegations of official misconduct made against Dr. Azikiwe, the Regional Premier, and the dissolution of the House of Assembly and fresh elections in 1957. All these incidents had some direct and significant influence on the course of events in the field of education during the

period. At the appropriate places in the subsequent chapters, each of them will be examined in relation to its contribution and effects on what actually happened.

### 6.1 The Constitutional and Political Background

Following the outcome of the Nigerian Constitutional Conference which took place in London between May 23, and June 26, 1957, under the chairmanship of Mr. Alan Lennox-Boyd, the Colonial Secretary, both the Eastern and the Western Regions of Nigeria attained internal self-government on August 8, 1957, and the Northern Region in March, 1959.<sup>1</sup>

Among the provisions for regional self-government were that:

"the Governor should be required, acting in his discretion, to reserve for Her Majesty's pleasure any Bill which in his opinion might have the effect of impeding or prejudicing the performance by the Federal Government of any of its functions or endangering the continuance of federal government of Nigeria"; while "the Governor-General in his discretion and with the approval of the Secretary of State should be empowered to issue such directions to a region as he might think necessary to ensure that the executive authority of the region was not exercised in such a way as to impede or prejudice the performance by the Federal Government of any of its functions or to endanger the continuance of federal government of Nigeria".<sup>2</sup>

Thus, although a region might be self-governing, both the Regional Governor, and the Governor-General in Lagos still had the power to intervene where the action of a regional government appeared to them to be endangering the security of the Federation. As will be shown in Chapter Seven, this discretionary power was used in the case of Eastern Nigeria by the Governor-General during a crisis which resulted from the UPE scheme in 1958. Until the attainment of national independence in 1960, the fear of possible intervention by Her Majesty's Government would seem to have acted as a check in the pursuit of some regional policies.

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<sup>1</sup> Ezera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit. p.240.

<sup>2</sup> ibid., pp. 233-4.

Another decision reached by the Conference was the appointment of a Federal Prime Minister for the country. Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa of the NPC was appointed to the post on September 2, 1957. Soon after this appointment, he formed a new national government in which all the three major political parties, the NPC, the NCNC and the AG were represented. The parties agreed to come together in a national government so that the country would be able to present a united front in its demand for political independence from the United Kingdom Government in 1960. They sank their political differences for this common national objective.<sup>3</sup>

At the Constitutional Conference held in London between September 29, and October 27, 1958, the three parties were unanimous in their demand for political independence for Nigeria in 1960. The Conference fixed October 1, 1960 as the date for the country's independence. Before then, there was to be a general election into the Federal House of Representatives. The United Kingdom Government would hand over powers to the government to be formed after the general elections.<sup>4</sup>

The elections were held on December 12, 1959. None of the political parties won enough seats to be able to form the first government of an independent Nigeria. The strength of the parties in the new House of Representatives was as follows:<sup>5</sup>

|               |     |     |     |           |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| NPC           | ... | ... | ... | 134 seats |
| NCNC          | ... | ... | ... | 89 seats  |
| AG            | ... | ... | ... | 73 seats  |
| Other parties | ... | ... | ... | 16 seats  |
| Total         |     |     |     | 312 seats |

After one week of political manoeuvring and consultations, the NPC and the NCNC formed a coalition government with Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa as the

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<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 243-4.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p. 253.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 262-3.

Prime Minister. The NPC was the senior partner.

One of the terms of the coalition was that Dr. Azikiwe, the leader of the NCNC would resign his premiership of the Eastern Region to become the President of the newly created federal upper chamber - the Senate. Subsequently, he became the Governor-General of the Federation "in accordance with the secret pact between the leaders of the NPC and the NCNC". The Nigerian nation became independent on October 1, 1960, under a federal constitution.<sup>6</sup> Thus, at independence, the former leader of the NCNC was soon to become the constitutional head of the Nigerian nation; the party itself was in coalition with the NPC at the centre; in power in the East; and a strong official opposition in the West. One of the effects of such a position of political strength was that the NCNC government of Eastern Nigeria was more confident in implementing its educational policies than before.<sup>7</sup>

For better understanding of the post-independence firmness of the East Regional Government in its relationship with the Missionary Societies in education (see Chapter Eight), and the subsequent crises in Nigeria as a whole leading on to the military coup d'etat of 15th January, 1966, we shall pause to examine the federal constitution under which national independence was achieved. This is because many of the events of the later years may be explained by the way powers were shared between the Federal and the Regional Governments under the Constitution.

To understand the Nigerian situation, it may be necessary to quote William H. Riker's analysis of federalism. According to him:

"If a federalism is centralized, then the ruler(s) of the federation have and are understood to have greater influence over what happens in the society as a whole than do the rulers of the subordinate governments. And, having this influence, they tend to acquire more. Thus, an identifying feature of centralized federalism is the tendency as time passes, for the rulers of the federation to overawe

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*, p.264.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. chapter 7.3-5 and the whole of Chapter Eight.

the rulers of the constituent governments. Conversely, if a federalism is initially peripheralized, the rulers of the subordinate governments tend to acquire more; and thus an identifying feature of peripheralized federalism is the tendency, eventually, for the rulers of constituent governments to overawe the ruler(s) of the federation."<sup>8</sup>

In Riker's view, "Peripheralized federalisms ... can hardly be expected to provide effective government". In his analysis of the Nigerian federal system in 1963, his conclusion was that "it is surprising that the federation exists at all".<sup>9</sup> Thus, the difficulties and the crises of the later years may be attributed largely to the peripheralized nature of the Nigerian Federal Constitution, and of course, the role of the major political parties and the attitudes of the people themselves.

Under the Independence Constitution, the Regions enjoyed greater powers than the Federal Government.

"The exclusive list of the Federal Government functions covers a set of forty-four items including accounts; aviation, borrowing money; bills of exchange; currency; customs, defence, external affairs; shipping; Lagos affairs; mines and minerals; naval, military and air forces; passports and visas; railways; weights and measures, etc."<sup>10</sup>

The Constitution also conferred special and emergency powers on the Federal Government. Under this section, period of emergency was defined as "(a) when the Federation is at war; (b) when there is in force a resolution passed by each House of Parliament declaring that a state of public emergency exists; (c) when each House by two-thirds votes declares that democratic constitutions in Nigeria are threatened by subversion".

Some other powers labelled 'concurrent' were mutually held by both the Federal and the Regional Governments. Other enumerated powers concerning law and order, social and educational questions, were given to the Regions.

<sup>8</sup>Riker, W.H., Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance, Boston: Little Brown Boston, U.S.A. 1964, p.7.

<sup>9</sup>ibid., p.31.

<sup>10</sup>Ezra, K. op. cit. p. 266.

<sup>11</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

Each Regional Police Commission controlled its own police unit. The responsibility for good government, peace and order was assigned to the Regions. They were also made responsible for all items not included in the Federal Exclusive List. All these were in addition to what were described as "concurrent and incidental powers" also enjoyed by the Regions. On the whole, the Regions enjoyed more powers than the Federal Government.<sup>12</sup>

In the same way as Dr. Azikiwe left the Eastern Region for the centre after the 1959 Federal Elections, so also did Chief Awolowo resign the premiership of the West to become the leader of opposition in the Federal House of Representatives. He was succeeded in the West by the deputy leader of the Action Group, Chief S.L. Akintola. After the Federal Elections, the latter had wanted the party to join the NPC in forming a coalition government at the centre. But Chief Awolowo was vehemently opposed to any form of co-operation with the NPC.<sup>13</sup>

The disagreement between the two Action Group leaders came into the open in February 1962 during the party's annual congress in Jos. From that date, the AG was split into two factions - one led by Awolowo and the other by Akintola. In the end, the latter was stripped of his vice-presidency of the party and the premiership of the Western Region. He and his group reacted by resigning from the Action Group. They formed a new political party, the Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP), and Chief Akintola himself refused to resign the premiership of the Western Region.

As a result of the Action Group crisis, the government of the Western Region came almost to a standstill. Neither Chief Akintola nor Alhaji Adegbenro, the new premier nominated by the Awolowo faction, could function. There were many serious violent clashes between the supporters of the two leaders. The violence and demonstrations generated by both factions made

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<sup>12</sup>See Ostheimer, J.M.; Nigerian Politics,. Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1973, pp. 38-40.

<sup>13</sup>ibid., p. 49.

it impossible for the meeting of the Regional House of Assembly to be convened. In the end, the Federal Government intervened and declared a state of emergence throughout the Region. It also appointed an 'Administrator' to run the affairs of the Region for six months.

At the end of the emergency period, and instead of dissolving the Regional House of Assembly and calling for fresh elections, the NPC/NCNC controlled Federal Government invited Chief Akintola to form a new government for the West. He did so by teaming up with the NCNC members of the Regional Assembly. At the same time, "Awolowo found himself facing the charges of a commission examining the malpractices of the Action Group, and then a trial ending in a 10-year sentence for treason".<sup>14</sup>

Chief Akintola had earlier filed an action in the Western Nigeria High Court against his dismissal as the premier by the Regional Governor "contending that the governor had no right to decide merely because a majority of the legislative members had signed a petition supporting Adegbenro". The Regional High Court passed the suit to "the Federal Supreme Court without ruling, and that Court supported Akintola's claim". Awolowo's supporters took the case to Her Majesty's Privy Council's Judiciary Committee which "reversed the Nigerian Federal Supreme Court's decision in May, 1963. The Federal Government ignored the new ruling and asked Akintola to continue in office as the Premier of the Region."<sup>15</sup>

While the Western Region was engulfed in the political crisis, the NPC/NCNC controlled Federal Government passed a bill carving out the Benin and Delta Provinces of the West into the Mid-Western Region. It formally came into existence on August 12, 1963 with Chief D.C. Osadebe, the former NCNC President of the Senate as the leader of a sixteen-man team

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<sup>14</sup> ibid., p. 50.

<sup>15</sup> ibid., p. 51; for a detailed account of the Western Nigeria crisis, see also Luckham, R., The Nigerian Military, Cambridge University Press, 1971. pp. 211-229 and Ezera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 270-8.



to administer the new Region for an interim period of six months. A general election which followed later in 1964 was won by the NCNC, and Chief Osadebe was confirmed as the substantive premier of Nigeria's fourth region.<sup>16</sup>

In 1963, too, a new constitution aimed at turning Nigeria into a republic was introduced. In effect, this meant that the post of the Governor-General as surrogate head-of-state acting on behalf of Her Majesty, the Queen of the United Kingdom, would be replaced by that of "an indirectly elected president who would serve 5 years". In the process of the constitutional change, Dr. Azikiwe who was the Governor-General and also tipped for the new post of president, protested against the NPC proposal of attaching no executive powers to the office of the president. The party ignored his protests and passed the new constitution into law.<sup>17</sup>

While all the above major events were taking place, there was a country-wide census in 1962. The North had been able to dominate the Federal Government on account of its numerical strength based on the 1953 census figures. But after the 1962 census, the "imbalance had shifted from 57 per cent in favour of the North ... to 49 per cent minority in 1962". The Northern leaders rejected the figures. A recount was ordered by the Federal Government in 1963. Its result published in February, 1964 showed a majority of 29.8 million for the North out of a total population of 55.7 million for the country. The NCNC whose national president at this time was the Premier of Eastern Nigeria, Dr. M.I. Okpara, rejected the new census figures and described them as "worse than useless".<sup>18</sup>

In addition to all the above national problems, the workers throughout the country had their own grievances. Their minimum wage structure had not kept pace with the rising cost of living and could not be compared in any way

<sup>16</sup>Ezera, K., op. cit. pp. 278-9.

<sup>17</sup>Ostheimer, J.M., Nigerian Politics, op. cit. p. 52; see also Ezera, K., pp. 282-291.

<sup>18</sup>Ostheimer, J.M., Nigerian Politics, op. cit. p. 54, see also Ezera, K., op. cit. pp. 279-282.

with the high salaries of the politicians and the top civil servants. It was for this reason that in 1964, the workers came together to demand higher pay from their employers. When the Governments failed to respond positively to their demands, they went on a nation-wide strike starting from the 1st of June, 1964. After two weeks of the industrial dispute, the Governments acceded to most of their demands. The strike action itself "demonstrated the depth of public feeling against the conspicuous corruption of the politicians, with which the meagre minimum wage was contrasted."<sup>19</sup>

In the midst of all the crises, a general election was held into the Federal House of Representatives in December, 1964. When the NCNC rejected the census figures published in February 1964, it had hoped that the entire South would team up together in rejecting the figures. But instead, the Akintola Government of Western Nigeria accepted them and at the same time, went into political alliance with the NPC. The NCNC reacted by withdrawing from the Government of the Western Region and also directed its members to withdraw from the coalition with the NPC at the centre. This led to a general political re-alignment in the country. The NPC and the NNDP teamed up to form the Nigerian National Alliance (NNA), while the NCNC and the AG came together to form the United Progressive Grand Alliance (UPGA) to contest the 1964 Federal elections.

A few days before the elections, the UPGA alleged that there were massive electoral abuses and for that reason, announced that it was boycotting the elections. The NNA went ahead with the elections in the North and the West where it was in power. They were not held in the East and the Mid-West which the UPGA controlled. They took place in these places three months later.

The NNA won the elections in the North and the West. But the President, Dr. Azikiwe would not invite Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the leader of the NNA at the centre to form a new government on the grounds that there were

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<sup>19</sup> Luckham, R., *The Nigerian Military*, op. cit. pp. 214-5; see also Ostheimer, J.M., op. cit. p. 55.

serious electoral malpractices. For a while, the country was without a government. In the end, the crisis was resolved by all the parties agreeing to take part in the new Federal Government. The Action Group, although in alliance with the NCNC would not agree to participate in the Government. The crisis therefore was not satisfactorily resolved but merely patched up. The basic issues such as the census figures and the rigging of the elections remained unresolved.<sup>20</sup>

In October, 1965, elections were held into the Western House of Assembly. The UPGA leaders had very much hoped to win the election. That they failed to do so was because the selection

"was openly rigged by the NNDP. Candidates were prevented from filing their nominations, local government police and thugs kept political opponents from the polls, ballot boxes were stuffed with extra ballot papers and when all else failed, NNDP candidates were declared elected by the regional radio station in contests that went against them".<sup>21</sup>

The NCNC and Action Group supporters in the West rejected the election results and unleashed a wave of terrorism. They began "to rob, loot, burn and kill. The official police toll of casualties was 153, though in reality considerably more are thought to have been killed".<sup>22</sup> The NNA dominated Federal Government ignored the troubles in the West. It concentrated its attention on organising a Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in Lagos to find a solution to the Unilateral Declaration of Independence in Rhodesia.

In addition to all the above problems, there was also that of the discrimination against Southerners in Northern Nigeria "in civil service and commercial employment as well as in the award of contracts". At this time, the North Regional Government was giving preferential treatment to Pakistanis, Sudanese, Egyptians and Europeans in matters of employment.

<sup>20</sup> Ostheimer, J.M., op. cit., pp. 55-6.

<sup>21</sup> Luckham, R., The Nigerian Military, op. cit. p. 218.

<sup>22</sup> ibid., p. 219.

There was also the general problem of unemployment throughout the Federation. Primary and secondary school leavers without job prospects were increasing year by year. All these together with corruption and nepotism in high places produced "an alarming wave of discontent, frustration and disillusion among student groups, intellectuals, workers and youths all over the country, particularly in the South".<sup>23</sup>

Most Nigerians felt really disappointed and disillusioned. The politicians on their part, were busily engaged in intrigues and counter intrigues against one another and amassing wealth for themselves by all imaginable corrupt practices. The educated elite outside politics in particular, were the most bitter of all at the failure of the politicians to fulfil the promises of political independence.

The general mood of the people towards the politicians was expressed by the 'intellectual', Odili in Chinua Achebe's novel published in 1966, A Man of the People. It was during a political campaign rally addressed by one of the politicians. As he was addressing the huge crowd, Odili, who was one of them, said to himself:

"What would happen if I were to push my way to the front and up the palm-leaf -festooned dais, wrench the microphone from the greasy hands of that babbling buffoon and tell the whole people - this vast contemptible crowd - that the great man they had come to hear with drums and dancing was an honourable thief. But of course they knew that already. No single man and woman there that afternoon was a stranger to that news . . . And because they all knew, if I were to march to the dais now and announce it they would simply laugh at me and say:What a fool".<sup>24</sup>

Under the above circumstances, by December, 1965, Nigeria was a divided country and at brink of collapse. It had been torn apart by the Western Region crisis, the imprisonment of Chief Awolowo, the controversy over the

<sup>23</sup>Exera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 297-8.

<sup>24</sup>Achebe, C., A Man of the People. John Day Company, New York, 1966, pp. 130-31.

republican constitution, the census dispute, the controversial federal and Western Region elections, corruption and nepotism in high places, mass unemployment and the rising cost of living which the meagre incomes of the masses could not keep pace with. The political system and parties had decayed, and it was at that point that the army stepped in to bring Nigeria's short period of democratic experiment to an end on January 15, 1966.

It is to be noted that while all the crises and disputes were going on, the East remained virtually unaffected in any direct way. Its government enjoyed a great deal of political influence and authority through its association with the Governments of the Federation, the Western and the Mid-West Regions. It was from such a position of political stability and strength in the national setting that the East Regional Government pursued its educational and other programmes during the post-independence period. The feeling of high absolute authority within its area of jurisdiction must have been a significant determinant in its relationship with the Missionary Societies in educational matters during the 1960's as the events discussed in Chapter Eight seem to suggest. In fact, the enormous powers of the government party were such that would brook no opposition not even from the Church in educational matters.

## 6.2 Economic Development in Eastern Nigeria

The period 1957-65 was one of accelerated economic development in Eastern Nigeria. We shall illustrate this by examining some selected aspects of the economic life in the Region.

With the attainment of regional self-government in 1957, the Government embarked on the development of the transport system as an important aid to the growing economy. In the 1958-62 Regional Development Programme, 28 per cent of the capital outlay of £20,732,400 was allocated to transport. During the four-year period, the road mileage figures in the Region rose from 10,257 in 1958 to 17,722 miles in 1962, an increase of 73 per cent (see

the figures below).

Mileage of Public Roads in Eastern Nigeria 1958-62.<sup>25</sup>

|      |     |     |     |        |
|------|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| 1958 | ... | ... | ... | 10,257 |
| 1960 | ... | ... | ... | 14,026 |
| 1962 | ... | ... | ... | 17,722 |

In the Six-Year Development Plan 1962-68, transport was allocated 11.8 per cent of the proposed expenditure of over £75 million. This was the third highest allocation after primary production, and trade and industry. In 1964, the percentage was revised to 13.8 "to pick up the costs of uncompleted road and bridge-building projects from the earlier plan".<sup>26</sup>

The first five years after the attainment of national independence in 1960 also witnessed a remarkable rate of industrial development in the Region. As Barry Floyd described it, between 1962 and 66:

"Almost everywhere one finds carpenters, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, wrought-iron workers, welders, tailors, shoe makers and bakers. In larger centres are printers, repairers of typewriters and sewing machines, vulcanisers, lorry- and bus-builders, mechanics for repairing heavy equipment".

Other small scale industries included panel-beaters and tinkers who produced such articles as storage trunks, kitchen equipment and lamps. Other articles produced by this group of industries ranged from jewellery to plastic travelling bags, mattresses to nails and small machines. Their services included motor-vehicle maintenance photography, dry cleaning, repairing of clocks, radios and bicycles.<sup>27</sup>

In 1965, it was estimated that there were 750 industrial establishments employing ten or more people in Eastern Nigeria. Of that number, there were 70 that employed 50 or more people. The employee distribution of the 70 industries were as shown below:<sup>28</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Floyd, B., Eastern Nigeria: A Geographical Review. op. cit. p. 290.

<sup>26</sup> ibid., p. 291.

<sup>27</sup> ibid., p. 257.

<sup>28</sup> ibid., pp. 256-7.

| No. of Employees |         |            |       |
|------------------|---------|------------|-------|
| 50-200           | 200-500 | 500-2,000+ | Total |
| 41               | 19      | 10         | 70    |

In 1966, it was estimated that the small scale industries provided "employment for approximately three times as many people as are engaged in large-scale industry". A survey on small scale industrialisation in Eastern Nigeria published in 1963 in respect of 14 urban centres showed that there were 10,728 firms employing a total of 28,721 workers in those places.<sup>29</sup>

The major industries were in the areas of coal mining, drilling for petroleum and natural gas; oil refining, quarrying of stone, clay and sand; food, beverage and tobacco; textile, wearing apparel and footwear; tree, wood and paper products; chemicals and pharmaceuticals; glass, clay and cement products; metal products, machinery and transport equipment; manufacture of gramophone records and plastic products.<sup>30</sup>

The largest of the industrial establishment in Eastern Nigeria was the Shell-BP Petroleum Development Corporation of Nigeria Limited. It started its exploration for oil in the country in 1937 and by 1966, it had grown into a giant organisation with approximately 4,000 direct employees, a capital investment of £150 million, and an output of 15 million tons of oil from Eastern and Mid-Western Regions of Nigeria. The export of crude oil from the country was valued at £68 million in 1965. This was nine years after oil was first found in commercial quantities in parts of the former Eastern Region and later in the Mid West.<sup>31</sup>

In February 1958, "the first shipment of Nigerian oil left Port Harcourt (now in the Rivers State) for a refinery in Europe". In all, 245,000 tons of crude oil was exported from the country in that year. That figure

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 258.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*, p. 262.

<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, p. 264.

represented only 1.6 per cent of the quantity being exported by 1966.

An oil refinery was established at Alesa-Elene in the present Rivers State in 1965 at the cost of £10 million.<sup>32</sup>

With the large discoveries of oil in the East beginning in the late 1950's, and under the policy of revenue allocation on the basis of derivation at the national level, and the large scale employment opportunities offered to the people by the oil companies, the economy of the Region began to show remarkable improvement. For instance, the Federal Government revenue allocation to the East in 1960 was £9,373,000 compared with £4,190,000 in 1953. From 1958 onwards, the federal revenue to the East was on steady increase largely as a result of the oil discoveries there.<sup>33</sup> All these together had the effect of increasing the financial ability of the local communities and parents to send more children to primary and secondary schools, and to pay for the establishment of new ones. The Regional Government itself was also in a position to spend more money on education and other things than before (see Tables XXX,XXXIII and XXXV).

There was also some remarkable rate of development in the field of agriculture, the mainstay of the regional economy. In 1962 for example, the Government launched its Farm Settlement Scheme. Its aim was "to revolutionize traditional farming systems and to teach Eastern Nigerians to produce cash crops through the application of modern agricultural methods". The Settlements were financed, organised and supervised by the Regional Ministry of Agriculture. The settlers were allocated pieces of land and supplied with the necessary modern equipment and technique for operating the farms.<sup>34</sup> Many of them were known to have been very successful.

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<sup>32</sup> ibid., pp. 264-5.

<sup>33</sup> Ekundare, R.O., An Economic History of Nigeria 1860-1960. Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1973, p. 243.

<sup>34</sup> Floyd, B. op. cit. p. 225.



By mid 1965, there was a total of 29 Settlements with 1,525 settlers throughout the Region. They served as a source of employment for primary school leavers. In the 1962-68 Development Plan, the Regional Government allocated a total of £6,125,000 or nearly 17 per cent of the total provision for primary production to the development of these and some other new settlements. Under the revised estimates of the Plan in 1964, the figure was raised to £7,800,000 or 21 per cent.<sup>35</sup>

The Regional Government also established the Eastern Nigeria Development Corporation (ENDC) whose main function was to improve the quantity and the quality of oil palm produce on which the economy of the Region largely depends. The Corporation established pioneer oil mills; oil palm, cashew, and cocoa plantations; and cattle ranches.<sup>36</sup> The acres of palm grove rehabilitated by the ENDC between 1956 and 65 were as follows:<sup>37</sup>

| Year |     | Areas Planted (acres) |        |
|------|-----|-----------------------|--------|
| 1956 | ... | ...                   | 146    |
| 1958 | ... | ...                   | 163    |
| 1960 | ... | ...                   | 687    |
| 1962 | ... | ...                   | 1,761  |
| 1963 | ... | ...                   | 3,793  |
| 1964 | ... | ...                   | 10,480 |
| 1965 | ... | ...                   | 13,616 |

In the 1962-68 Development Plan, a total of £1.9 million was set aside by the Regional Government for the rehabilitation of 60,000 acres over the following five years. The rehabilitation of palm groves led to higher production palm oil in the Region as the figures below show.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup> ibid., pp. 225 and 227.

<sup>36</sup> Ekundare, R.O., *An Economic History of Nigeria 1860-1960*. op. cit. p.247.

<sup>37</sup> Kilby, P., *Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1966*. Cambridge University Press, 1969, p. 144.

<sup>38</sup> ibid., pp. 153-155,

Palm Oil Production in Eastern Nigeria for Selected Years 1955-1965

| Year |     |     | Palm Oil (tons) |
|------|-----|-----|-----------------|
| 1955 | ... | ... | 128,797         |
| 1957 | ... | ... | 117,133         |
| 1959 | ... | ... | 135,286         |
| 1961 | ... | ... | 270,800         |
| 1965 | ... | ... | 287,300         |

As the economy of the Region depends to a large extent on palm produce, the increased production of palm oil meant more income for both the Regional Government and the farmers. This in turn had the effect of higher public expenditure on education, and enrolment, and more children staying on to the last grade of the primary school system (see Tables XXX and XXXV).

In addition to agricultural development, the ENDC also made loans to indigenous companies and private individuals for the establishment of poultry farms, rubber-processing plants, bakeries, corn mills, lime works and mechanical laundries. By 1960, the Corporation had made loans totalling £1.5 million to such firms and individuals. It had also made a loan of £530,000 to Onitsha Urban Council for the construction of the Onitsha market; invested £500,000 into the Nigerian Cement Company Limited established by the Regional Government at Nkalagu; and another £490,000 into the Oban (Nigeria) Rubber Estates Ltd., Calabar also owned by the Government.<sup>39</sup>

The attainment of independence and rapid economic development also led to rapid increase in the number of salaried workers and trade unions. For instance, the number of trade unions and their membership in Nigeria as a whole between 1950 and 1965 were as follows:<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Ekundare, R.O., op. cit. p. 247.

<sup>40</sup>Kilby, P., Industrialisation in an Open Economy: Nigeria 1945-1966. op. cit. p. 271.

| Year | Number of Unions | Membership |
|------|------------------|------------|
| 1950 | 140              | 110,000    |
| 1955 | 177              | 165,100    |
| 1960 | 347              | 259,100    |
| 1964 | 540              | 357,200    |
| 1965 | 642              | n.a.       |

n.a. 'not available'.

In the case of the major teachers' union, the Nigeria Union of Teachers, its membership rose from 5,626 in 1956 to approximately 90,000 in 1964.<sup>41</sup> During the period, the Union was becoming increasingly more active in its demand for better conditions of service for its members as shown by the Union's strike action in 1964 (see Chapter 8.2.7).

The increase in the number and the membership of trade unions in the country also led to more industrial disputes. For instance, between 1953 and 1965 the reported labour disputes in Nigeria were as follows:<sup>42</sup>

Table XXV No. of Labour Disputes and Strikes in Nigeria for Selected

Years 1953 - 1965

| Year | No. of Disputes | No. of Strikes | No. of Men Involved |
|------|-----------------|----------------|---------------------|
| 1953 | 52              | 33             | 9,990               |
| 1956 | 98              | 30             | 23,623              |
| 1959 | 131             | 54             | 23,250              |
| 1962 | n.a.            | n.a.           | n.a.                |
| 1965 | n.a.            | 195            | 73,447              |

n.a. 'not available'

During the same period, the minimum daily wages paid to workers in Eastern Nigeria rose from 2s:3d in 1953 to 6s:3d in 1966. The rates for the

<sup>41</sup>Smyke, R.J. and D.C. Storer, Nigeria Union of Teachers An Official History. op. cit. pp. 194 and 223.

<sup>42</sup>Kilby, P., op. cit. p. 275.

whole country were as follows:<sup>43</sup>

Table XXVI Minimum Daily Wages in Nigeria, 1953 - 1966

| Year    | West   | East   | North  |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|
|         | s d    | s d    | s d    |
| 1953    | 2 : 7  | 2 : 3  | 1 : 10 |
| 1954-58 | 3 : 2  | 3 : 2  | 2 : 4  |
| 1959-63 | 3 : 10 | 3 : 10 | 3 : 0  |
| 1964-66 | 6 : 3  | 6 : 3  | 4 : 0  |

Finally, the establishment of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, by the East Regional Government in 1960 was of some significant effect. The University gave rise to a corps of academics and militant undergraduates who constituted a vocal pressure group on the side of the Regional Government. For instance, during the census dispute in 1964, the students' Union of the University supported the NCNC in rejecting the figures and later took the Federal Government to Court seeking the nullification of the census. As a student of the University at the time, the author knows that the court action was inspired and financed by the NCNC and the East Regional Government through the Students' Union. At other times, the students were made to organize protest demonstrations in support of policies and views favoured by the NCNC and the Eastern Nigerian Government. This was usually done through the students' wing of the party.

Again, in 1965, when the Regional Government was about to implement its policy of establishing Provincial Boards to take over the management of primary schools from individual Voluntary Agencies, it requested the Institute of Education of the University to hold a seminar on the subject and to make recommendations (see Chapter 8.2.8). At the end of it, the Regional Government used the Seminar recommendations to back up the proposed

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<sup>43</sup>ibid., p. 367.

establishment of School Boards. The point was emphasised that a higher institution of learning dedicated to truth and objectivity had strongly advised the state take-over of primary education.

### Summary

On the whole, the political and economic developments of the period, 1957-65, had two major effects on education. The autonomy of the Regional Government in social matters including education, after independence, gave it a great deal of confidence in pursuing its policies. This arose from the knowledge that there was no external higher constitutional authority associated with the expatriate missionaries to intervene in the event of crisis as was the case before independence (see Chapter 7.2.5). The party in power in the East was a part of the coalition Federal Government which alone could exercise such power of intervention.

The rapid rate of economic development on the other hand, opened up a wider range of employment opportunities for the educated members of the society. As a result of this, by the 1960's the Missionary Societies had lost a great deal of their importance as major employment agencies. This led to the weakening of the influence of the Churches over the people both as their major employers and as agents of enlightenment and civilisation. The credit for the people's improved conditions in social amenities and job opportunities was attributed to the Government and not to the Churches. The effect of this was a shift in the people's loyalties from the Missions to the Government on whom they looked upon for the provision of social amenities including education.

The shift in loyalty meant an additional source of strength for the Government in its conflicts with the Missions over the management of the schools. In the knowledge that its educational policies enjoyed a great deal of popular support, the Government was able to pursue them more firmly than was the case earlier as the UPE scheme of 1967 discussed in the next

chapter seems to suggest.

The political consciousness of the people, the improved economy and the UPE scheme led to greater demand for education and its faster rate of development as will be shown shortly. This in itself had the effect of accentuating the problem of educational financing inherited from the colonial period. The Missionary opposition to the new government policy of greater state participation in the management and control of the school system engendered an atmosphere of conflict between Church and Government in educational matters as will be shown in Chapters Seven and Eight.

### 6.3 The Development of the School System 1957-65

#### 6.3.1 Primary Education

##### A. The Period of Internal Self-Government 1957-59

The three years of Regional Self-Government, 1957-59 coincided with the implementation of the nationalist educational policies and laws and their effects on the school system. The number of schools and their enrolment for the three-year period were as shown below.

Table XXVII Primary School Education in Eastern Nigeria 1957-59:<sup>44</sup>

Number of Schools and Enrolment.

| Ownership           | No. of Schools |       |       | Enrolment |           |           |
|---------------------|----------------|-------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|                     | 1957           | 1958  | 1959  | 1957      | 1958      | 1959      |
| Government          | 11             | 11    | 11    | 3,046     | 2,875     | 3,118     |
| Local Authority     | 1,511          | 1,766 | 1,748 | 86,298    | 147,457   | 214,111   |
| Voluntary (Aided)   | 5,381          | 4,751 | 4,869 | 1,115,378 | 1,066,146 | 1,154,877 |
| Voluntary (Unaided) | 86             | 92    | 52    | 4,445     | 4,793     | 6,297     |
| Totals              | 6,989          | 6,620 | 6,680 | 1,209,167 | 1,221,271 | 1,378,403 |

It will be recalled that in 1956, there were 5,066 primary schools with an enrolment of 775,144 in the Region (see Chapter 5.6, Table XXIV). But in

<sup>44</sup> Adapted from Annual Reports 1957, 1958 and 1959, pp. 27, 29 and 28 respectively.

1957, the number went up to 6,989 showing an increase of 1,923 or approximately 38 per cent. This trend was as a result of the UPE scheme launched in January 1957. To cope with the anticipated increase in enrolment, the Regional Government made grants to the Local Government Councils to open 1,516 new primary schools to absorb the overflow from the existing ones.<sup>45</sup>

The original policy of the Government was that only the Local Authorities could open new primary schools under the scheme. But following serious objections by the Missionary Societies, the ban on their opening new primary schools was 'temporarily' lifted, and in 1957, they were able to open new ones (see Chapter 7.3 and 4). The effect of this was that not all the 1,516 new Local Authority schools were able to open. A number of them were rendered redundant.

A year after the UPE scheme was launched, the Government adopted the policy of exercising stricter control on the establishment of new primary schools, and closing down others described as 'unviable'. This policy is reflected in the decline of the number of schools between 1957 and 58.

The Government policy of greater state involvement in education had the effect of sharply increasing the number of schools managed by the Local Authorities from 42 in 1956 to 1,511 in 1957. For instance, of the 1,923 new schools opened in 1957, 1,469 or 76.4 per cent were by the Local Government Councils and only 453 or 23.6 per cent by all the Voluntary Agencies together.

Another effect of the policy on the school system was the shift in the overall ownership from the Missions to the Local Authorities. For instance, in 1956, the Voluntary Agencies together controlled 99 per cent of the schools and 98.2 per cent of their enrolment. But in 1959, the percentages had gone down to 73.7 and 84.2 respectively. These figures show that although the Voluntary Agencies were still dominant in the school system in 1959, but the new Government policy had reduced the degree of their control

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<sup>45</sup> Annual Report 1956, p.2.

over the three-year period.

Finally, and no less important, the policy of greater state involvement in education in terms of more provision, control and management, had the effect of bringing nearly all the schools into the aided list. For instance, their number went up from 2,653 in 1956 (see Table XXIV) to 5,381 in 1957, showing an increase of 2,728 or 102.8 per cent. On the other hand, the number of unaided schools sharply dropped from 2,361 to 86 during the same period. To fulfil its promise of greater educational opportunities for the masses, the Nationalist Government had abolished the payment of the ALC or school fees and the education rating introduced in 1950, under its UPE scheme. The implication of all these was that in 1957, all but 86 of the 6,989 schools were being fully financed from public funds. The few unaided schools were purely private ones outside the public system. Their existence was provided for under the Education Law, 1956.

After one year of operation, the burden of the new system of educational finance proved more than the Government resources could bear. It therefore became necessary for the scheme to be modified in order to reintroduce the payment of the ALC or fees in some classes. The attempt to do this led to one of the most serious educational crises in the Region (see Chapter 7.2.5). The background to the UPE scheme and the final form in which it was launched are examined in greater detail in Chapter 7.2.1.

The failure of the attempt by the Regional Government to bring almost all the primary schools into the aided list, the abolition of fees and rates, underlined the importance of the financial contributions of the Churches and the local communities to education before the introduction of the UPE scheme. For instance, in 1956, there were 2,361 unaided primary schools with an enrolment of 150,306 (see Table XXIV). The policy of greater state involvement in education also meant greater public expenditure which the Government could not afford. This in turn, increased the tension between the Missions and the Regional Government in educational matters.



In relation to primary school teachers, the trends were as shown below.

Table XXVIII      Primary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1957-59<sup>46</sup>  
Number of Teachers, Pupil/Teacher Ratio and Average Enrolment per School.

| Year | No. of Teachers | Pupil/Teacher Ratio | Average Enrolment per school |
|------|-----------------|---------------------|------------------------------|
| 1957 | 40,841          | 30:1                | 173                          |
| 1958 | 39,746          | 31:1                | 184                          |
| 1959 | 45,709          | 30:1                | 206                          |

The number of teachers in the primary schools followed almost the same trend as the growth in actual number of schools and their enrolments (see Table XXVII). It rose by 11,170 or approximately 37.7 per cent from 29,671 in 1956 to 40,841 in 1957. The sharp increase was caused by the UPE scheme. More teachers had to be engaged to cope with the great number of children who had come forward to take advantage of the scheme.

Of the additional number of teachers, only 3,000 or 26.9 per cent were certificated. "The rest were mostly newly engaged probationers". The Education Department had conducted a one-month training course for them. For fear of all-round dilution of standards in primary schools, the Government directed that trained teachers must not be diverted from the previously grant-aided and relatively well staffed schools to the new ones by the Local Authorities. The effect of this was that a considerable majority of the new schools operated without a single trained teacher on their staff.<sup>47</sup>

In spite of the official policy of reducing the influence of the Missionary Societies in education in favour of the Local Government Councils, the above directive shows that the Nationalist Government was not entirely against the

<sup>46</sup> See Annual Reports 1957 and 1959, pp. 10 and 11 respectively, and Table XXVII above.

<sup>47</sup> Annual Report, 1957, p. 10.

Missions. It was prepared to sacrifice standards in the new Local Authority schools in order to maintain them in those of the Voluntary Agencies. Evidence such as this would suggest that the new policy was not an all-out attack against the Church in educational matters.

Certain measures adopted by the Government were responsible for the fluctuations in teacher population during the period. The first was the re-introduction of school fees in six of the eight primary classes in 1958, one year after they were abolished. As a result, an estimated 260,000 children were said to have dropped out of the school system because their parents could not afford to pay their fees.<sup>48</sup> The re-introduction of fees was also partly responsible for an enrolment increase of only 1 per cent between 1957 and 1958 as compared with 56 per cent between 1956 and 1957 (see Tables XXIV and XXVII).

The second was the Government policy of more economic deployment of available resources. As a result, some of the schools considered to be uneconomic were either closed down or merged with others. In all, between 1957 and 1958, the number of schools was reduced by 369 (see Table XXVII). The same policy was also responsible for the increase in the pupil/teacher ratio from 30:1 to 31:1 in-between the two years.

The combined effect of the policy measures and the training of more teachers was that about 2,580 of the uncertificated ones recruited prior to the launching of the UPE scheme were rendered redundant, and their appointments were terminated.<sup>49</sup>

In 1959, a year after the payment of fees was reintroduced, there was an enrolment increase of 12.9 per cent as compared with 1 per cent in the previous year. Many of the children who dropped out as a result of the re-introduction of fees, were sent back to school by their parents a year later. In addition, the Government authorized the opening of 60 new schools

<sup>48</sup>Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 11.

<sup>49</sup>See Annual Report 1958, pp. 11 and 29.

in 1959. The pupil/teacher ratio also dropped from 31:1 in 1958 to 30:1 in 1959. With effect from the later year too, the non-payment of fees was extended to the third grade of the primary schools. As a result of all these together, there was a sharp rise in teacher population between 1958 and 59.

By 1959 too, the Local Government Councils were reported to have transferred the people's spirit of rivalry and competition into their educational activities. By that date, they had started to compete with one another over the well being of their primary schools. The case of Owerri Province was used to illustrate this trend. There, the Councils were reported to have

"developed a keen interest in the schools and had begun to judge the rate of their progress by comparison with the achievement of their neighbours. Some of the more enterprising Councils had begun consideration of plans for the provision of teacher training colleges in which their own teaching staff would be trained".<sup>50</sup>

Finally, on primary education, the statistics for the whole country in 1959 showed that educational activities had continued to be greater in the East than in the other two Regions. It had 42.7 per cent of all the primary schools in the country and 49.7 per cent of their enrolment. Apart from the high population density territory of the Federal Capital, Lagos, the average enrolment per school in the East was higher than in either of the other two Regions. The actual figures were as shown in the table below.

Graphically, the growth in number and enrolment of primary schools in Eastern Nigeria for the period 1952-9 was as shown in Figures XIV and XV below.

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<sup>50</sup> Annual Report 1958, p. 12.

Table XXIX Primary Schools in Nigeria 1959: Number and Enrolment  
by Regions.<sup>51</sup>

| Region   | No. of Schools. | Enrolment | Average<br>Enrolment per School |
|----------|-----------------|-----------|---------------------------------|
| Eastern  | 6,680           | 1,378,403 | 206                             |
| Western  | 6,518           | 1,080,303 | 166                             |
| Northern | 2,340           | 250,912   | 107                             |
| Lagos    | 103             | 66,320    | 644                             |
| Nigeria  | 15,641          | 2,775,938 | 178                             |

#### B. The Post-Independence Period, 1960-65

In 1959, the Regional Government imposed a ban on the establishment of new primary schools by the Voluntary Agencies. This new policy was strictly enforced all through the period, 1960-65. Although the Missionary Societies continued to protest against it, the Government refused to lift it (see Chapters 7.3 and 8.1.1). The policy was that new primary schools could be opened only by the Local Government Councils in places "where there were real needs for them".<sup>52</sup>

Another policy decision concerning primary education was the reduction of its duration from eight to seven years with effect from 1st January, 1961. When the Government decision was first announced in 1960, the representatives of the Missionary Societies at the Regional Board of Education opposed it. But in spite of this, the Government went ahead and implemented the decision (see Chapter 8.2.2).

At the same time, it was also proposed "to reduce it further to six years when the ratio of trained to untrained teachers had so increased to ensure that standard would not thereby be lowered".<sup>53</sup>

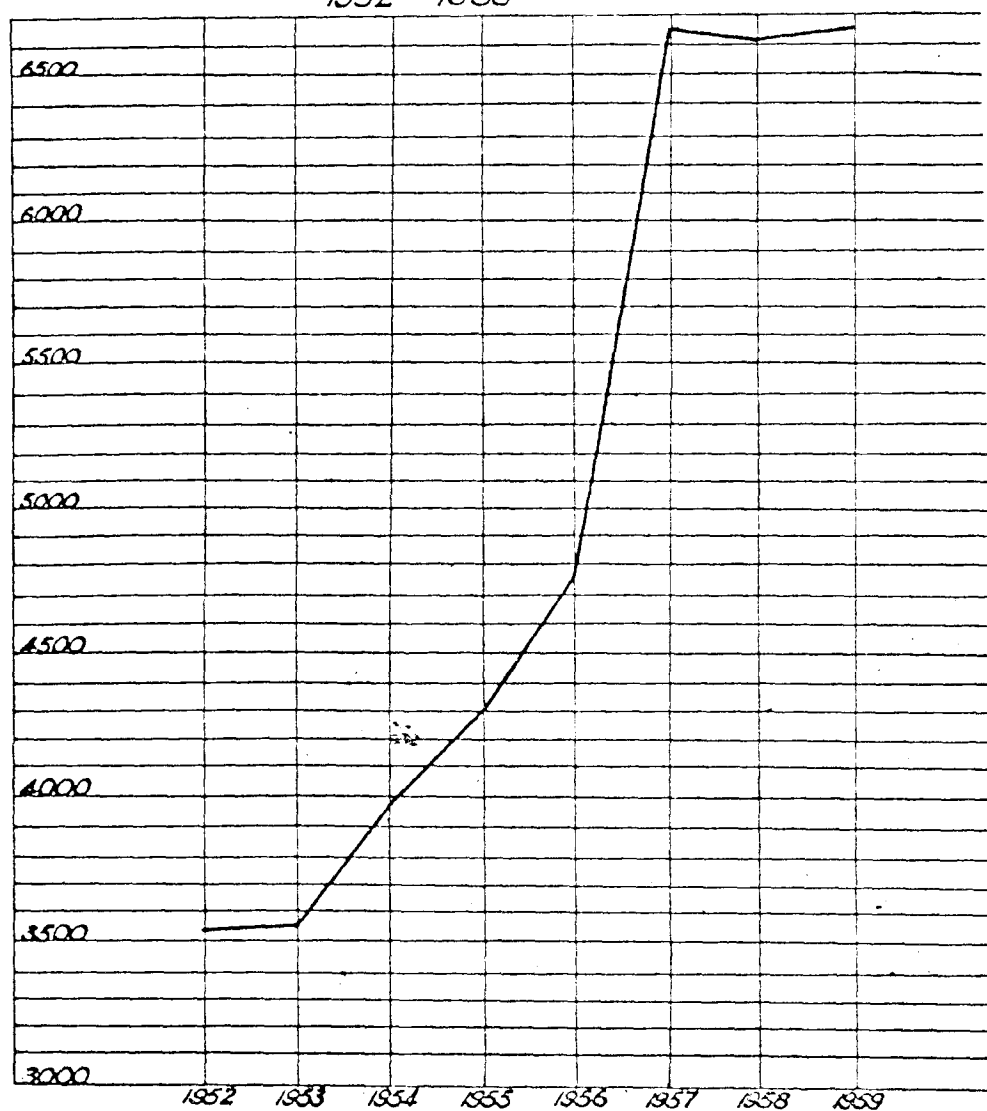
<sup>51</sup> Adapted from Federal Education Department: Digest of Statistics, 1960.  
Table 2. Federal Information Service, Lagos, 1960.

<sup>52</sup> Annual Report 1962, p.1.

<sup>53</sup> Annual Report 1961, p.1.

Fig. XIV

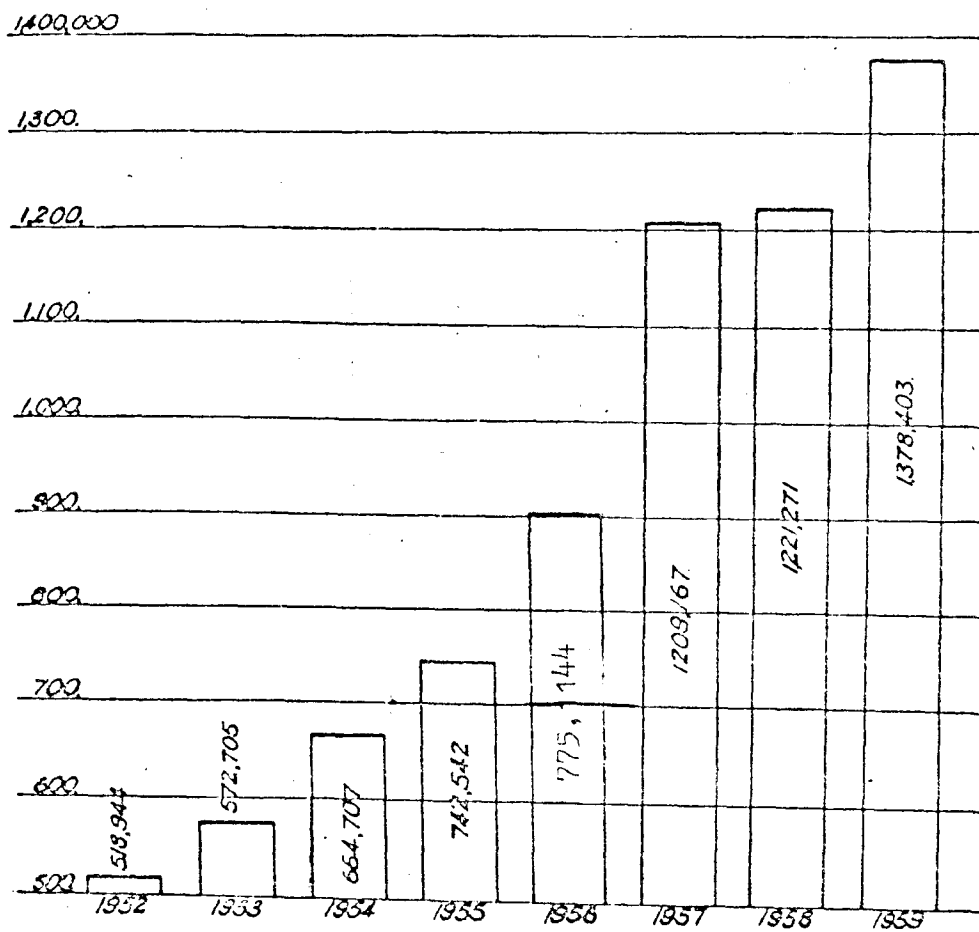
NUMBER OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS<sup>54</sup>  
1952 ~ 1959



<sup>54</sup> Annual Report 1959, Graph 3.

Fig. XV

PRIMARY SCHOOL ENROLMENT<sup>55</sup>  
1952-1959



<sup>55</sup> Annual Report, 1959, Graph 6.

During this period too, and inspite of opposition from the Missions and the local communities, the Government policy of closing down or merging the schools described as 'unviable' or 'uneconomic' was vigorously pursued. For a school to be so classified meant that it had an enrolment of less than 60 pupils and was within three miles radius of a well established primary school. The aim of this policy was to rid the system of "an unnecessary burden and a cog in the wheel of the educational progress", as the unviable schools were described.<sup>56</sup>

In pursuit of this policy, the Ministry of Education carried out a survey of all primary schools in the Region in 1962. The result was that 580 or approximately 10 per cent of the total number were found to be 'unviable'. By the end of the year, 262 of them were closed down outright, 81 were merged with other neighbouring schools and the remaining 237 were reduced to junior primary to serve as feeders to other nearby senior primary schools.<sup>57</sup> A similar survey was repeated in 1964 and this time, another 64 schools were declared 'unviable' and were all closed down.<sup>58</sup> The overall effect of this policy was that between 1959 and 1965, a total of 731 such schools were either closed down or merged. Of that number, 452 or 61.8 per cent were owned by the Missionary Societies and the remaining 279 or 38.2 per cent by the Local Authorities (see Tables XXIX and XXX). This showed that not all the unviable schools were established by the Missions. The Local Authorities had more of them (see Chapter 9.5).

As a result of the ban on the establishment of new primary schools and the closing or merging of the unviable ones, the number of schools followed a consistent downward trend all through the period to the end of 1965 (see Table XXX). The number progressively went down from 6,680 in 1959 to 6,540 in 1961 and finally to 5,949 in 1965.

<sup>56</sup> Annual Report 1962, p.1.

<sup>57</sup> ibid., p. 12.

<sup>58</sup> Statistical Digest 1966, Eastern Nigeria, p.8.

Table XXX Primary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1960-65: No. of schools. Enrolment and Teachers. 59

| Year | No. of schools | Infant I       | Infant II      | Standard I | Standard II | Standard III         | Standard IV | Standard V | Standard VI | Total Enrolment | Average Enrolment per school | No. of Teachers | Pupil/Teacher Ratio |
|------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------|-------------|----------------------|-------------|------------|-------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1960 | 6,449          | 316,000*       | 257,400*       | 253,500*   | 235,000*    | 121,164              | 102,000     | 76,000     | 67,500      | 1,428,564       | 222                          | 44,284          | 33:1                |
| 1961 | 6,540          | - <sup>a</sup> | 337,732*       | 264,270*   | 236,890*    | 170,412              | 110,392     | 85,015     | 69,672      | 1,274,383       | 195                          | 42,267          | 30:1                |
| 1962 | 6,488          | - <sup>a</sup> | 334,138*       | 275,017*   | 234,132*    | 138,854 <sup>c</sup> | 126,021     | 83,596     | 75,308      | 1,266,466       | 189                          | 44,589          | 28:1                |
| 1963 | 6,050          | - <sup>a</sup> | 346,126*       | 279,120*   | 247,169*    | 129,435              | 110,602     | 89,926     | 76,328      | 1,278,706       | 211                          | 38,954          | 33:1                |
| 1964 | 5,986          | - <sup>a</sup> | - <sup>b</sup> | 336,868*   | 276,513*    | 241,228*             | 138,860     | 90,552     | 88,976      | 1,172,997       | 196                          | 33,783          | 35:1                |
| 1965 | 5,949          | - <sup>a</sup> | - <sup>b</sup> | 342,463*   | 283,387*    | 254,491*             | 140,948     | 95,820     | 82,593      | 1,199,693       | 202                          | 33,372          | 36:1                |

\* non fee-paying classes

(a) The primary school course was reduced from eight to seven years with effect from January, 1961, see Annual Report 1961, p. 8.

(b) The course was again reduced from seven to six years with effect from January 1964, see Annual Review 1964, p. 10.

(c) The increase in fees for Standards III-IV in 1962 was partly responsible for the high drop-out rates between those classes from that year (see Chapter 6.4).

<sup>59</sup> Adapted from Annual Reports 1960, 1961, 1962, 1963 and 1964, pp. 8-11; 35-8 and 41-2; 39-42; 38-41; 49-50 and 52-5 respectively; and Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria Official Document No. 2 of 1970 pp. 8-20.



The development of primary education in Eastern Nigeria thus far, shows that the peak in the number of schools was reached in 1957 when it stood at 6,989. That was one hundred and ten years (1847) after the Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission opened the first school in Calabar. By 1957, there was hardly a village in the Region without its own primary school. Many of them had more than one. By that date, the thirst for primary education had reached its saturation point and the period of consolidation had set in. In doing this, a total of 1,040 or 14.9 per cent of the schools were either closed down or merged between 1957 and 1965 (see Tables XXVII and XXX).

On pupil enrolment during the period (Table XXX), the abolition of Infant I with effect from 1961 led to very high enrolment in Infant II for that year. All those who would have been admitted into Infant I were enrolled in Infant II and Standard I.

There was a high drop-out rate all through the school system. But this was higher between the last non-fee paying class and the first fee-paying class. For instance, in 1962, the last non-fee paying class was Standard II.<sup>60</sup> The drop-out rate between that class in 1962 and Standard II in 1963 which was fee-paying was 104,697 or 44.7 per cent. There was also the fact that the fees for Standards III-VI were increased in 1962. As a result of this, more children would drop out of the school system than before. Again, when the non-payment of fees was extended to Standard III in 1964, the drop-out rate between that class and Standard IV the following year was 100,280 or 41.6 per cent. The reason for this trend is obvious. Many of the pupils continued in school up to the last non-fee paying class and after that, dropped out of the system because their parents could not afford the fees.

The overall school enrolment and its average per school were highest in 1960. For the rest of the period both figures fluctuated down and up.

<sup>60</sup> Annual Report 1962, p.3.

<sup>61</sup> Annual Report 1964, p. 10.

With the reduction in the number of schools, one would have expected the average enrolment to be on steady increase. That this was not so may be explained by two main factors: one, between 1961 and 1964, two classes were removed from the primary school system, thus reducing its duration from eight to six years; two, during the period, many of the schools did not yet attain the highest primary class. For instance in 1964 only 2,500 or 41.8 per cent of the schools offered the full six-year primary education course. For that year, the highest classes offered by the 5,986 primary schools in the Region were as follows:<sup>62</sup>

| Highest Standard Offered | No. of Schools |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 1                        | 47             |
| 2                        | 180            |
| 3                        | 2,231          |
| 4                        | 612            |
| 5                        | 416            |
| 6                        | 2,500          |
| Total                    | 5,986          |

The trends in the number of schools and their enrolments were also reflected on the teacher population during the whole period. The abolition of Infants I and II in 1961 and 1964, the closure or merging of 644 schools between 1962 and 64, and the increase in pupil/teacher ratio between 1963 and 1965 were responsible for the steady decline in the number of teachers for most of the period. There was also the fact that in 1962, the individual class size per teacher for the purposes of calculating government grant-in-aid and the ALC was raised from 30 to 36.<sup>63</sup> In practice, this would reduce the number of teachers attracting grants from the Government. The appointments of the teachers who were not likely to attract grants as a

<sup>62</sup>Annual Report 1964, p. 56.

<sup>63</sup>Annual Report 1962, p. 3.

result of the ratio increase would normally be terminated by the Voluntary Agencies (see Chapter 9.1.ii).

In spite of the general decline in number and enrolment, the East continued to be ahead of the other Regions particularly its main rival, the West, in primary education up to 1965. The figures for both Regions in that year were as follows:

| Region                | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Eastern               | 5,949          | 1,199,693 |
| Western <sup>64</sup> | 4,364          | 737,148   |

As the high rate of educational activities continued in the East, so did the difficulty of finding money to pay for it was on the increase too (see Chapter 7.4).

By the end of 1965, primary education in Eastern Nigeria by controlling agency was as shown in the table below:

Table XXXI Primary Education in Eastern Nigeria by Controlling Agency, 1965<sup>65</sup>

| Controlling Agency  | No. of Schools | %    | Enrolment | %    | Teachers | %    |
|---------------------|----------------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|
| R.C.M.              | 2,380          | 40   | 503,871   | 42   | 14,350   | 43   |
| Protestant Missions | 1,434          | 24.1 | 321,518   | 26.8 | 9,010    | 27   |
| Local Authorities   | 1,469          | 24.7 | 227,942   | 19   | 6,107    | 18.3 |
| Other Missions      | 655            | 11   | 143,963   | 12   | 3,838    | 11.5 |
| Government          | 11             | .2   | 2,399     | .2   | 67       | .3   |
| Eastern Nigeria     | 53,949         | 100  | 1,199,693 | 100  | 33,372   | 100  |

<sup>64</sup> Federal Ministry of Education: Annual Digest of Education Statistics, Series No. 1, Vol. V, 1965, p.8.

<sup>65</sup> Calculated from Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Table 2.17, p. 21 and Ministry of Education, Enugu Minutes of the Meeting of Representatives of Agencies and Bodies Engaged in Educational Work in Eastern Nigeria, held on 23-25 August, 1965. p.9. (hereinafter referred to as the "Educational Agencies Meeting, 1965").

The above table shows that the Roman Catholic Mission controlled the highest number of the schools, their enrolment and teachers. The same proportion of primary education under its control would also reflect its numerical strength among the population. It was on account of such a strong position that the Mission was able to challenge with some effect, the educational measures of the Government that were unacceptable to it (see Chapter 7.2.3 and 4).

The table also shows that as of 1965, the Christian Denominations together controlled 75.1, 80.8 and 81.5 per cent of the number of primary schools, their enrolment and teachers respectively.

It should also be noted from the table that the enrolment and the number of teachers in Local Authority schools were lower than those of the Protestant Missions together despite the fact that the former had more schools than the latter. The reason was that many of the Local Authority schools were yet to attain the highest primary class. In 1964 for example, only 239 or 16.2 per cent of their 1,473 schools offered full primary courses. In the case of the Protestant Missions together, 816 or 56.2 per cent of their 1,452 schools in that year had the highest class. The highest classes attained by the schools of the two agencies in 1964 were as follows:<sup>66</sup>

| Highest Primary Class | Protestant Missions | Local Authorities |
|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1                     | 17                  | 11                |
| 2                     | 29                  | 63                |
| 3                     | 389                 | 782               |
| 4                     | 105                 | 206               |
| 5                     | 96                  | 172               |
| 6                     | 816                 | 236               |
| Total                 | 1,452               | 1,473             |

<sup>66</sup> Annual Report 1964, p. 56.

Finally, the reduction of the primary school course from seven to six years in 1964 was followed by the revision and the re-organisation of its curriculum in line with the new number of years. The revision exercise was said to be intended "to reflect modern trends in educational thought". Subjects were grouped into core studies with emphasis on Nigeria and Africa in Social Studies. At the same time, the Ministry of Education issued a List of Approved Textbooks and Equipment and "model time-table" and distributed to School Managers and Headmasters. The aim of the time-table was to ensure "a judicious allocation of periods for the different subjects".<sup>67</sup>

During the revision of the primary school curriculum, the Ministry of Education seized the opportunity to propose a Common Religious Knowledge Syllabus for all primary schools. Copies of its were sent to the Missionary Societies for their comments and suggestions. While the Protestant Missions were prepared to consider the syllabus, the RCM rejected it outright. This led to a serious controversy between the Catholic Bishops and the Minister of Education (see Chapter 8.2.4). The overall effect of the Regional Government policy of greater state involvement in the management and control of the school system from 1951 to 1965, is reviewed in Chapter 8.3 after the major events of the period had been examined.

### 6.3.2 Secondary Education

#### A. The Period of Internal Self-Government, 1957-59

The rate of development of secondary education during this period was as shown in the table below.

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<sup>67</sup> ibid., p. 10.

Table XXXII    Secondary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1957-59:  
Number of Schools and Enrolment<sup>68</sup>

| Ownership           | No. of schools |      |                   | Enrolment |        |        |
|---------------------|----------------|------|-------------------|-----------|--------|--------|
|                     | 1957           | 1958 | 1959              | 1957      | 1958   | 1959   |
| Government          | 4              | 4    | n.a. <sup>a</sup> | 711       | 741    | n.a.   |
| Local Authority     | 4              | 6    | n.a.              | 249       | 372    | n.a.   |
| Voluntary (Aided)   | 46             | 47   | n.a.              | 10,321    | 11,037 | n.a.   |
| Voluntary (Unaided) | 29             | 42   | n.a.              | 3,551     | 4,687  | n.a.   |
| Totals              | 83             | 99   | 106               | 14,832    | 16,837 | 19,289 |

n.a. = not available

The above table shows an increase of 23 new secondary schools between 1957 and 1959. For the three-year period, the number increased by 27.7 per cent and the enrolment by 30 per cent. Compared with 38 such schools in the Region in 1948 with an enrolment of 7,000 students,<sup>69</sup> there was more than double all round of growth during the eleven-year period.

Part of the reason for the rapid rate of development was, and as had been the case earlier with primary schools, most villages at this time struggled to establish their own secondary schools. In 1957 for example it was reported that there was "a definite 'prestige' influence" in the establishment of secondary schools by local communities and private individuals in the Region.<sup>70</sup> As will be shown later, this tendency continued into the 1960's.

The effect of the new trend was similar to what was the case with primary education, the Voluntary Agencies (used here to include the local communities and private individuals), owned and managed a great majority of the secondary schools. For example, in 1956, they controlled 91.5 per cent of their numbers and 93.5 per cent of their enrolment (see Table XXIV).

<sup>68</sup> Adapted from Annual Reports 1957, 1958 and 1959, pp. 27,29 and 16 respectively.

<sup>69</sup> Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p.49.

<sup>70</sup> Annual Report 1957, p. 10.

Two years later, the percentages were 89.9 and 93.4 respectively. It is unlikely that the figures for 1959 were significantly different.

In that case, what happened was that while the Nationalist Government policy was shifting the balance of educational control in favour of the Local Government Councils at the primary level, the same policy was not extended to secondary education. In other words, while the policy was geared towards greater Local Authority involvement in primary education, at the secondary level, there was no restriction on any of the parties. For instance, in 1957, 40 of the 83 secondary schools in the Region, were owned by local communities and private individuals which included many of the top politicians. The remaining 43 were by the Missionary Societies, the Regional Government and the Local Authorities.<sup>71</sup>

Such a policy explains why, until after the national crisis and the civil war, the controversies between the Missionary Societies and the Government were confined to primary education. Until then, there was no move towards state take-over of the management of the secondary schools.

Several reasons could be advanced to explain the official policy on secondary education. One of them could be that because the demand for secondary school places was still in excess of available facilities, it would be unreasonable to limit the establishment of such schools to any one or group of agencies which might not have adequate resources to satisfy the demand. It was, therefore, better to tap all available resources for this level of the school system.

There was also the allegation (see Chapter 9.6), that the great demand for secondary education made it a good financial enterprise for proprietors and that was partly why many private individuals in particular, embarked on the establishment of secondary schools. If that were true, it could possibly have influenced the policy determined by the politicians some of

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<sup>71</sup> See Annual Report 1957, pp. 14-15.

whom were secondary school proprietors. But although there is some evidence (examined also in Chapter Nine), that some secondary schools had surplus funds from grants and fees after all expenses, that in itself is not enough to prove that private individuals had gone into secondary education in order to make money. It could have been a part of the motive. All the same, it is difficult to determine the degree of its influence on their decision to establish secondary schools.

#### B. The Post-Independence Period, 1960-65

The Regional Government's open-door policy on the establishment of secondary schools, the great rate of development which had taken place at the primary level, the improved economic circumstances of the Region, and the attainment of political autonomy by the country as a whole, all had the combined effect of greater demand for secondary education and rapid growth in its provision. Between 1960 and 65, a total of 170 new secondary schools were established in the Region. That was an average of more than 28 per year. The enrolment rose from 19,289 in 1959 to 58,059 in 1965 showing an increase of 38,770 students or 201 per cent. For the same period, the teaching staff increased from 1,173 to 3,373 or by 187.6 per cent.<sup>72</sup> The year to year rate of development was as shown in the table below.

Table XXXIII Secondary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1961-65<sup>73</sup>  
Number, Enrolment and Teachers

| Year <sup>a</sup> | No. of Schools | Enrolment | Student/<br>School | No. of Teachers | Student/<br>Teacher ratio |
|-------------------|----------------|-----------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| 1961              | 137            | 24,982    | 182                | 1,473           | 17 : 1                    |
| 1962              | 197            | 31,802    | 161                | 2,035           | 16 : 1                    |
| 1963              | 222            | 39,753    | 179                | 2,346           | 17 : 1                    |
| 1964              | 245            | 47,051    | 192                | 2,763           | 17 : 1                    |
| 1965              | 276            | 58,059    | 210                | 3,373           | 17 : 1                    |

a: The figures for 1960 are not available

<sup>72</sup> Calculated from Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Tables 2.4 and 2.10 pp. 9 and 14.

<sup>73</sup> Adapted from ibid., Tables 2.4; 2.10 and 2.17 pp. 9, 14 and 21.



Compared with the other two Regions, the number of schools and their enrolments were higher in the East. The figures for the Western and Northern Regions were as follows:<sup>74</sup>

| Region   | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
|----------|----------------|-----------|
| Western  | 205            | 36,849    |
| Northern | 77             | 12,885    |

The ownership of the 276 secondary schools in Eastern Nigeria in 1965 was distributed as follows:<sup>75</sup>

|                                  |     |     |     |
|----------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|
| Private Individuals              | ... | ... | 76  |
| Roman Catholic Mission           | ... | ... | 71  |
| Protestant Missions              | ... | ... | 59  |
| Local Communities                | ... | ... | 41  |
| Government and Local Authorities | ... | ... | 29  |
| Total                            |     |     | 276 |

Consistent with the Nationalist Government policy of encouraging and assisting secondary schools by Africans, the private individuals topped the list in the ownership of secondary schools in the Region by 1965. Together with the local communities which were also to be encouraged and assisted, they accounted for 117 or 42.4 per cent of the schools as compared with 37 or 18 per cent by both groups of the 205 secondary schools in the Western Region in 1965.<sup>76</sup>

It may be relevant to mention that most of the private individuals in secondary education were the top politicians. During the period, the establishment of secondary schools was very popular among them. Commenting on this in his Annual Report 1964, the Secretary of the Eastern Education

<sup>74</sup>Federal Ministry of Education: Statistics of Education in Nigeria 1965: Series No. 1, vol. 5, Lagos pp. 100-107; see also Republic of Nigeria: Report on Educational Progress 1965-66, Lagos, 1966. Table 2, p.6.

<sup>75</sup>Statistics of Education in Nigeria, op. cit. loc. cit.

<sup>76</sup>see ibid., pp. 108-113.

Advisory Committee (EEAC) of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Mr. R.I.

Uzoma observed inter alia:

"It seems to me that the ambition of every politician and every Minister is to start a secondary school in his village. The number of secondary schools owned by private individuals is larger in the Eastern Region than in any other. One Honourable member<sup>77</sup> who a few years ago on the floor of the House described these individuals as 'Educational Contractors' last year became an 'Educational Contractor' himself".<sup>78</sup>

Considered under the background allegation that many secondary schools operated on a 'profit basis' (see Chapter 9.6), and the absence of any major conflict between the Missionary Societies and the Government over secondary education as was the case at the primary level, where the private individuals were not involved, it is difficult to eliminate the profit motive as one of the considerations for private interest in secondary education.

In the case of the local communities, the basic desire for more education and the people's spirit of rivalry and competition motivated their entry into the field on a large scale. As soon as secondary education was perceived as a symbol of progress, many communities, through the agency of their Improvement Unions, struggled to open their own secondary institutions.

All the Missionary Societies together had a total of 130 or 47.1 per cent of the secondary schools with the RCM topping the list among them. The Protestant Missions together had 59 as against 71 by the RCM.

The distribution of the schools among the various agencies was such that not one of them could really be said to have been dominant. The evidence

<sup>77</sup>The 'Honourable member' referred to above was the Government Chief Whip in the Eastern House of Assembly who, in 1961, attacked private individuals in secondary education. Later on, he applied and got permission and opened a secondary school in his village. The attack itself is discussed in Chapter 8.1.2.

<sup>78</sup>Secretary, EEAC: Annual Report 1962 (an unpublished mimeographed document), p.2.

on which the allegation of profit making was based covered both mission and private schools. On this account and if it was true, the allegation would have applied to the various groups of secondary school proprietors and therefore, could not be held against the partnership arrangement per se.

In the 1962 Annual Report, the Secretary of the EEAC went on to say that in considering applications for the opening of new secondary schools, the policy of the Government was clearly that of giving preference to local communities and cultural organisations rather than to Churches. The policy also gave preference to girls' schools, so as to correct the imbalance in the proportion of girls' schools to boys'.

This last point is relevant. Many local communities would rather open boys' secondary schools and not girls', on account of the cultural value attached to males in the traditional society. The male child would be a member of the family for life and also live in the traditional homestead. He might also succeed as the head of the family if he lived to an old age.

But girls would get married as soon as they were of age and then leave the family for good. In that case, they would have been educated for someone else.

The RCM immediately took advantage of the new Government policy of giving preference to the establishment of girls' secondary schools. It shifted its emphasis to opening such institutions. The Mission, therefore, made many applications for permission and in a few years, it had opened girls' secondary schools in many parts of the Region quite often, in previously Protestant dominated areas.

Also in an effort to correct the imbalance between the number of boys' and girls' secondary schools, the Government adopted the policy of not giving any financial assistance to the former until they had functioned on their own for five years. But in the case of the latter, they became qualified for Government grants in their fourth year of existence.

This new policy created a major problem for the Protestant Missions.

In his annual report for 1963, the Secretary of the EEAC commented on the problem, and further observed that the new policy was working to the advantage of the Catholics. In the first place, the Secretary lamented the reluctance of the local communities to sponsor girls' secondary schools which the Government was prepared to approve. It was for this reason that the Protestant Missions were finding it difficult on financial grounds, to rival the RCM in the race for the establishment of secondary schools in the Region.

The Secretary went on to say that in the case of the Catholics, they did not appear to have any such difficulty. They were "dumping secondary schools in areas predominantly Protestant apparently without asking for local support. They have done this in Ohafia, Owerrinta, Eleme, Brass and Omoku areas". In these places, the Protestants were forced into a position in which they stood by helplessly watching the children of their members being admitted into Catholic secondary schools and subsequently being converted to Catholicism.<sup>79</sup>

The secret of the ability of the RCM to finance the establishment of secondary schools in particular without asking for local support lay in the practice in the Mission mentioned earlier in Chapter 4.1. Under it, the grants attracted in the form of salaries from the Government by their Priests and Sisters attached to schools, went into the Mission's funds and not to the individual members of its clergy. The Mission merely paid them maintenance allowances from Church dues from its members and ploughed back the bulk of the grants in the establishment of more schools.<sup>80</sup>

The Mission makes no secret of this practice and has even used it in one of its Joint Pastoral Letters to explain how it raised funds for the establishment of schools. In the statement, the Mission said inter alia:

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<sup>79</sup>Secretary, EEAC: Annual Report 1963 (an unpublished mimeographed document), p.5.

<sup>80</sup>Interview with His Lordship, Dr. Francis Arinze, Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, 6th December, 1975.

"The emoluments of Missionary Priests and Sisters went into the expansion of educational developments in the State".<sup>81</sup>

The Protestant Missions on the other hand, had no such arrangement with their clergy who would be married and could not afford to forego their salaries.

#### 6.4 The Regional Government and the Financing of Education 1957-65

Under the Eastern Nigeria Education Law 1956 and its subsequent amendments,<sup>82</sup> grants-in-aid to Voluntary Agency primary and secondary schools were assessed as follows:

##### (1) Primary Schools:

- "(a) The salaries of approved class teachers, the headmaster and such full-time specialist teachers as may be recognised by the Minister, and
- (b) a contribution of £5 multiplied by 30 for each approved class teacher less an assumed local contribution per annum
  - (i) of £5 multiplied by 30 for each approved class teacher in Standard II and Standard IV; and
  - (ii) of £8 multiplied by 30 for each approved class teacher in Standard V and Standard VI."<sup>83</sup>

##### (2) Secondary Schools:

- "(a) a sum equal to the amount of the salaries of the non-expatriate staff including administrative staff approved by the Minister; together with
- (b) a sum for expenses in connection with the expatriate staff approved by the Minister ... together with
- (c) a sum for allowance to members of the staff with special responsibilities ... together with
- (d) a sum for other expenses, not including boarding expenses, equal to £3 multiplied by 25 for each class of the school;
- (e) a sum for special expenses in respect of technical courses approved by the Minister equal to £1:5s multiplied by 25 for each approved class;

less an assumed local contribution of £18 multiplied by 25 for each class of the school, and in the case of Higher School Certificate classes the assumed local contribution shall be £6 multiplied by 20 for each class".<sup>84</sup>

<sup>81</sup> Catholic Bishops of South-Eastern State of Nigeria: Joint Pastoral Letter on Education, op. cit. p. 12.

<sup>82</sup> See Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. pp. 34-40; and Grants-in-Aid Regulations 1962, Eastern Nigeria Gazette No.

<sup>83</sup> 32 of 3rd May, 1962, pp. 2-15.  
Grants-in-Aid Regulations 1962, op. cit. p.3.

<sup>84</sup> ibid., p.5.

Provisions were also made for administrative and building grants to both primary and secondary schools. But as will be shown in Chapter Seven, building grants for primary schools were suspended between 1959 and 1964. When they were resumed, they were limited only to Local Government Councils which alone the Government would grant permission to open new primary schools "in areas where there are real needs for them". The denial of building grants to Voluntary Agency primary schools was another cause of conflict between the Missionary Societies and the Regional Government.

Under the grants-in-aid system regulations, the Government's expenditure on education for the period, 1957-59 were as shown in the table below:

Table XXXIV East Regional Government Expenditure on Education 1957-59.<sup>85</sup>

| Year | 1<br>Expenditure on<br>Education (£) | 2<br>% of<br>Total<br>Budget | 3<br>Primary<br>Educa-<br>tion (£) | 4<br>% of<br>1 | 5<br>Secondary<br>Education<br>(£) | 6<br>% of<br>1 | 7<br>Other levels<br>and Admin.<br>(£) | 8<br>% of<br>1 |
|------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|----------------|--|----------------|
| 1957 | 6,137,809                            | 41.92                        | 4,450,209                          | 72.5           | 447,486                            | 7.3            | 1,240,114                              | 20.2           |
| 1958 | 5,029,039                            | 37.64                        | 3,365,735                          | 66.9           | 396,785                            | 7.9            | 1,266,519                              | 25.2           |
| 1959 | 5,412,495                            | 42.71                        | 3,445,019                          | 63.6           | 383,167                            | 7.1            | 1,584,309                              | 29.3           |

The educational measures of the Government were reflected in its expenditure as outlined in the above table. For instance, the high percentage of 41.92 for 1957 was as a result of the expansion of facilities following the UPE scheme launched in that year (see Chapters 6.3.1 and 7.2.5). Compared with the £3,572,543 or 28.07 per cent of the Regional budget spent on education in 1956,<sup>86</sup> there was a sharp rise in 1957. The decline in expenditure a year later was as a result of the Government policy of re-introducing the payment of fees or ALC in six of the eight primary classes, the closure of the 369 primary schools and the reduction in the number of teachers (see Chapter 6.3.1). Again, with the enrolment increase

<sup>85</sup> Adapted from Annual Reports 1957, 58 and 59, pp. 32, 34 and 7 respectively.

<sup>86</sup> Annual Report 1956, Table V, p. 33.

of 12.9 per cent, the establishment of 60 new primary schools and the rise in the number of teachers by approximately 37.7 per cent in 1959, the educational expenditure went up again.

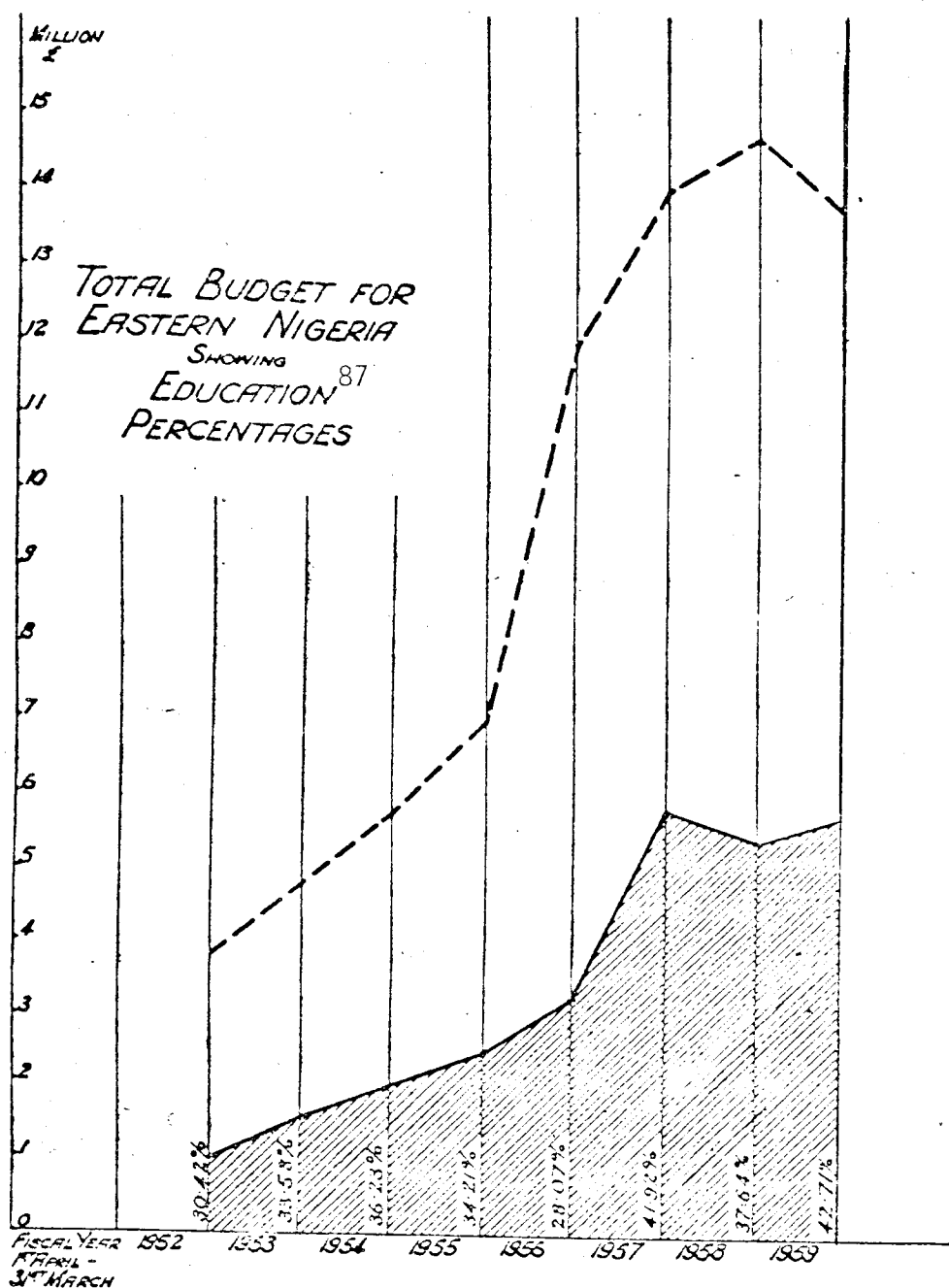
It should also be noted that between 1958 and 1959, more of the increase in educational expenditure was on "other levels and administration" and less on primary education. This was as a result of the Government's programme for the expansion of teacher training and technical education facilities launched in 1959.

The above table also shows that for the three-year period, primary education claimed an average of approximately 68 per cent of the total expenditure on education per annum. A graphic representation of the Regional Government's expenditure on education as a percentage of its total annual budgets for the period 1952-59 was as shown in Figure XVI below.

With such high proportions of public funds being invested in education particularly at the primary level, it would seem logical that any government would insist on stricter control and supervision of the school system to ensure that the funds were being economically utilized, and in the best possible interest of the public. To achieve this objective, different governments in different places would adopt different policies depending on a number of local variables such as: historical circumstances, political philosophy, available resources and the like. In the case of Eastern Nigeria, the policy adopted was for the Government to take over a greater share of the management and control of the primary school system in particular. It was the attempt to implement this policy that led to the series of controversies between the Missionary Societies and the Government discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight.

The period 1960-65 was one of consolidation at the primary level. In doing this, various measures were adopted by the Government. They were aimed at reducing the high cost of primary education and to ensure more economic deployment of available resources under stricter state control

Fig. XVI.



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Annual Report 1959, Graph 1.



(see the whole of Chapter Eight). The policy measures were amply reflected by the Government grants-in-aid to the Voluntary Agency primary schools in particular during the period. The expenditure on this item was as shown in the table below, and its analysis which follows, is designed to highlight some of the policy measures which had directly affected the education budget.

Table XXXV Eastern Nigeria Government Grants to Voluntary Agency Primary and Secondary Schools 1960-65<sup>88</sup>

| Year | Grants-in-Aid (£) |           |
|------|-------------------|-----------|
|      | Primary           | Secondary |
| 1960 | 4,084,778         | 345,094   |
| 1961 | 4,781,000         | 355,400   |
| 1962 | 3,834,900         | 342,600   |
| 1963 | 3,931,300         | 476,100   |
| 1964 | 5,032,000         | 504,000   |
| 1965 | 5,544,700         | 800,600   |

The first point to note is that all through the period, primary education continued to be a major item of expenditure.

Two different Government policy measures implemented between 1961 and 1963 were responsible for the drop in grants to primary schools in-between the two dates. The first was the reduction of the primary school classes from eight to seven in 1961. It will be recalled that the action rendered many of the untrained teachers redundant and that partly as a result, the teacher population dropped from 44,589 in 1962 to 38,783 the following year. In addition, the policy of more economic deployment of resources had the effect of raising the pupil/teacher ratio from 28:1 in 1962 to 33:1 in 1963 (see Table XXX). The reduction in the number of teachers in the school system meant less grants for their salaries.

<sup>88</sup> Adapted from Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Tables 2.22 and 2.23 p. 25 and Annual Report 1961, p. 3.

The second significant policy measure was the closing or merging of uneconomic schools recommended earlier by the Ikoku Conference Report in 1962 (see Chapter 8.1.4). It will be recalled that 580 schools were either merged or closed down. This had the effect of reducing the number of teachers and the schools on the aided list.

Different aspects of the policy pursued at this time were responsible for the sharp increase in grants for primary education between 1963 and 1965. They were as follows:

(i) After the financial crisis of the UPE scheme (see Chapter 7.2.5), the fees for Standards III and IV were fixed at £4 per annum and those for Standards V and VI at £6 per annum, and the factor for calculating the ALC at 30 per class and teacher.<sup>89</sup> But following the mounting cost of primary education, in 1962, the Government increased the fees for Standards III and IV to £5 and those of Standards V and VI to £8. At the same time, the factor for calculating the ALC was increased from 30 to 36.<sup>90</sup>

As a result of these measures, it became more difficult for many local communities to pay up the ALC or fee bill for their schools in full. One of the major problems was that many of the classes had less than 36 pupils on roll and so, the proportion of the teachers' salary bill meant to come from the ALC or fees to augment Government grant could not be fully raised. As a result, by 1963, "many teachers were going without salary for many months on end, and others being laid off for lack of funds to meet their salaries".<sup>91</sup>

Before the increases were effected, the Voluntary Agencies were complaining that the old rates were already too high for many local communities to raise. Since they were first introduced in 1958 (see Chapter 7.2.5), it had become increasingly more difficult for the Voluntary

<sup>89</sup> Annual Report 1958, p. 6.

<sup>90</sup> Annual Report 1962, p. 3.

<sup>91</sup> Christian Council of Nigeria, EEAC: Memorandum on Education Policy in Eastern Nigeria 1964, (an unpublished mimeographed document), p.1.

Agencies to pay their teachers because the estimated revenue from the ALC could not be raised in full from local sources to make up the Government grants. The increases of 1962 made the financial position of the schools worse than before. By 1963, some of the Missions had accumulated so much debts from the ALC that they called on the Government to take-over their primary schools as a way out of their financial problems (see Chapter 8.2.2).

But in 1964, the Regional Government responded by restoring the factor to the pre-1962 level of 30 pupils per class and teacher. It also extended the non-payment of fees to Standard III but reduced the elementary school course from seven to six years. These measures together were reported to have "brought immense relief to managers and the headmasters of schools, as well as to the communities, who, in 1963, had been involved in heavy shortfall of revenue, with the agonizing consequence of non-payment of teachers' salaries".<sup>92</sup> On the other hand, the modifications meant higher government expenditure on primary education between 1964 and 1965 as Table XXXC shows. It may also be noted that the ability of the Government to undertake the extra cost caused by those measures was because of the improved economy of the Region.

(ii) There was a general salary increase for teachers throughout the country in 1963 and the following year, the Eastern Nigerian Government spent a total of £683,670 as salary arrears to primary school teachers.<sup>93</sup>

(iii) In 1964, there were more trained teachers in the school system than say in 1961. Although the total number of teachers was more at the earlier date (see the table below), but in 1964, the increased number of certificated teachers and the higher salary scales for them in general both had the effect of increasing the Government's expenditure on teachers' salaries.

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<sup>92</sup>Annual Report 1964, p. 11.

<sup>93</sup>See Annual Report 1964, p. 11.

Table XXXVI Eastern Nigeria: Teachers in the Primary School System  
1961 and 1964<sup>94</sup>

| Year | Trained | %    | Untrained | %    | Total  |
|------|---------|------|-----------|------|--------|
| 1961 | 19,684  | 46.6 | 22,583    | 53.4 | 42,267 |
| 1964 | 25,845  | 76.5 | 7,938     | 23.5 | 33,783 |

The policy of the Government on secondary education was to make grants to qualified schools and to award scholarships to deserving students from the Region. This level of education was not universal as neither the Government nor the local communities could afford such a scheme. Table XXXV shows the Government's grants-in-aid to Voluntary Agency secondary schools between 1960 and 1965. Its scholarship awards to deserving students between 1961 and 65 were as shown below.<sup>95</sup>

| Year          | 1961 | 1962 | 1963 | 1964 | 1965 | Total |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| No. of Awards | 476  | 484  | 585  | 598  | 613  | 2,756 |

The proprietors in general would appear to have taken advantage of the Government open-door policy and the high demand for secondary education. The various fees they charged were so high that by 1964, it was costing as much as £135:10s per child per annum in non-government secondary schools in the Region<sup>96</sup> as compared with an average of £62 per annum in Western Nigeria.<sup>97</sup> At the same time, the total annual fee in the Eastern Nigeria Government secondary schools was £55:5s.<sup>98</sup>

Following a general out-cry against the high fees in the Voluntary Agency secondary schools in the East, the Government ordered an investigation into the allegations in 1964. Its findings were that: (i) the average tuition fee per annum was £28:16s; (ii) boarding - £28:6s:6d; (iii) book deposit

<sup>94</sup>Adapted from Annual Reports 1961 and 1964, pp. 11 and 49-50.

<sup>95</sup>Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Table 2.30, p. 23.

<sup>96</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. 'Secret' ES. 102/71, 1964.

<sup>97</sup>Minutes of Eastern Nigeria Board of Education Meeting, 6th January, 1964.

<sup>98</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. IN(S) 3618/93, p. 93.

ranged from £3 to £12; (iv) games - £2: 5s; (v) laboratory equipment fee - £3; (vi) cultural society fee - £1:1s; (vii) personal equipment - £15 to £19; (viii) class fee or Church dues - 10s :6d; and (ix) admission fee - £1 to £8.<sup>99</sup> All together, it cost an average of £135:10s per child per annum.

After considering the Report of the Investigation, the East Regional Government directed that with effect from 1st April, 1964, the maximum fees for all secondary schools in the Region were to be as follows:

- "(i) £30 per student for Board and Lodging in any one year.
- (ii) £24 per student for school fees in any one year.
- (iii) £6 per student in any one year for such items as library fees, games equipment, etc.
- (iv) An accountable deposit of £6 for each student against books supplied by the school. But a student who is able to buy the prescribed books outside the school should be allowed to do so and not be called upon to make the deposit".<sup>100</sup>

The allegation of surplus funds by standard secondary schools would tend to be strengthened by the findings of the Investigation. This is more so when it is recalled that the grants-in-aid to secondary schools took into account ALC (fees) receipts for only 25 students per class while the officially approved number of children per class was 30. This meant in effect that a standard double stream school would have at least 50 students whose fees were not taken into account in calculating the ALC. At the rate of £24 per student as tuition not to talk of the other charges, such a school would earn an unaccountable sum of £1,250 per annum. When all this is considered along with the findings of another similar investigation (see Chapter 9.6) it is difficult to dismiss the allegation as of no substance.

It should also be recalled that during the colonial period, primary and secondary school fees were not regulated by the Government. But under the nationalist Government, they were uniformly prescribed for all schools

<sup>99</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. 'Secret' ES. 102/71, 1964.

<sup>100</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Education Handbook, 1964, op. cit., p. 56.

in the public system. In noting this point, however, the differences in the circumstances of the two periods should not be lost sight of. Perhaps the measure could not have been introduced earlier than it was.

### Summary

Looking back over the fourteen-year period, 1951-65, one would say that the Eastern Region made a great deal of progress in the development of its primary and secondary education system. For instance, the number of primary schools rose from 3,656 with an enrolment of 572,705 in 1953 to 5,949 with an enrolment of 1,199,693 in 1965 (see Tables XXIII and XXX). In other words, by the end of the period under review, there were more schools and more children in them. The same goes for secondary schools whose number rose from 71 with an enrolment of 12,972 in 1956 to 276 with an enrolment of 58,059 in 1965.

There was also some remarkable improvement in the quality of primary school teachers in particular. For example, in 1957, only 3,000 or 26.9 per cent of the 40,841 teachers were certificated. But in 1964, 25,845 or 76.5 per cent of the total number in the primary school system were certificated. The number for 1965, although not available, was most likely to be higher.

The Region also achieved a more economic deployment of educational resources during the period. At least, a total of 1,040 unviable primary schools were either closed down or merged with others between 1957 and 65 (see Tables XXVII and XXX). Again, while the average enrolment per primary school was 158 in 1953, by 1965, it stood at 202. There was also more economic deployment of teachers. For example, the pupil/teacher ratio rose from 29:1 in 1952 to 36:1 in 1965.

Finally, the UPE scheme and the improvement in the overall economy of the Region both led to more educational opportunities. By the policy of greater Government involvement in the control and management of education,

the entire system was made more modern, and uniform in terms of laws, regulations, teacher qualifications and discipline, curriculum, fees and the like. On the whole, primary and secondary education was better organised and supervised in 1965 than at the beginning of the period.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONALIST GOVERNMENT POLICIES AND LAWS FOR EDUCATION AND THE MISSIONARY REACTION, 1951-1959

#### 7.1 The Period 1951-55

The early years of internal self-government, 1951-3, were comparatively uneventful in the relationship between the Missionary Societies and the new Regional Government. One of the main reasons for this was because the responsibility for primary and secondary education was not actually taken over by the Regions until 1954. Secondly, there was the political crisis in the NCNC party which ruled the Eastern Region. Finally, the new administration spent the period sorting out itself and working out its policies. It will be recalled that its first policy paper on education was issued in 1953. For these reasons, things were allowed to continue much in the same way as they had operated before self-government.

The first major action of the Regional Government was the take-over of the conduct of the First School Leaving Certificate examination from the Voluntary Agencies with effect from 1954.<sup>1</sup> It will be recalled that this examination had been conducted by the individual agencies since 1940. With the take-over, it became the direct responsibility of the Regional Ministry of Education.

A year after the central system of examination was reintroduced, the Protestant Missionary Societies issued a statement welcoming it and pointing out that:

"it had given an impetus to the pupils to study and had stimulated a spirit of competition among the teachers and schools - a 'healthy rivalry' - and the raising of standards".<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Annual Report 1956, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup>ibid., p. 14.



In its own statement, the RCM was not convinced that the examination as reconstituted was "either necessary or desirable". While there was no doubt that the new system had achieved rivalry between schools as the Protestants pointed out, on the other hand, the Catholic statement went on, that had been at the cost of bringing up the pupil against:

"the mental shock of an examination which will affect his whole life".<sup>3</sup>

There is no doubt that both arguments had their merits. But what is more important is that the stands taken by the two religious camps seem to underline their basic attitudes towards the state in educational matters. The Protestants as we know, are traditionally more flexible on the issue than the Catholics, and this would appear to have been reflected in the above two statements - the first in support, and the second against.

Another incident, though not directly on primary and secondary education, took place the following year, 1955. The RCM applied to the Regional Government for permission to open a university in Eastern Nigeria. The application was not granted on the grounds that the Government was already planning to establish one at Nsukka.

The RCM protested against the Government decision. It argued that the refusal to grant the permission was tantamount to denial of freedom of choice to its members who might prefer to send their children to the proposed Catholic university than to the one by the Government.

As the Catholics and the Government were arguing about the university, the Protestant Eastern Education Advisory Committee (EEAC), issued a statement supporting the stand of the Government on the proposed Catholic university. At its annual meeting held at Aba on 11th November, 1955, the Committee resolved to support the Government in its efforts to stop the Catholics from establishing a university in the Region. A statement issued

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<sup>3</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

after the meeting, expressed the view that there was no need for a second university in the Region and concluded:

"We should combat the idea that any one could open a university".<sup>4</sup>

The above incident is relevant for the reason that it was one of the early Catholic grievances against the Protestant dominated nationalist government of Eastern Nigeria at the time. The refusal to grant the permission reinforced the Catholic view that the Government was anti-Catholic. The support of the government decision by the Protestants was indicative of their future position on greater state involvement in education in the Region.

There was a second resolution at the Aba meeting of the EEAC. It expressed the view that it was in the overall interest of the Protestant Missions to lend their support to measures that might help to curtail the influence and the expansion of Catholicism in the Region.<sup>5</sup>

#### The Period 1956-59

The whole of this period was taken up by the preparations for, and the actual launching of the Universal Primary Education scheme in 1957, the controversies over it, the operation of the scheme for the first three years and the Dike Commission set up after the UPE crisis to review the entire system of education. The rest of this chapter is devoted to these topics and it is presented under the following headings:

#### 7.2 The UPE Scheme:

- (i) The background to the scheme;
- (ii) The scheme itself;

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<sup>4</sup>The Christian Council of Nigeria, Eastern Education Advisory Committee: Minutes of Annual Meeting held at Aba. Thursday, 11th November, 1955, p.2.

<sup>5</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

(iii) the reactions of:

- A. The Roman Catholic Mission;
- B. The Protestant Missions;
- C. The Local Government Councils

(iv) the Regional Government Response

(v) the Financial Crisis of the scheme, its modifications  
and effects

3 Government withdrawal of earlier concessions to the Missions; and

4 The Dike Commision.

#### 7.2.1 The Background to the Universal Primary Education Scheme

Immediately the British Protectorate of Southern Nigeria came into existence in 1900, the Yorubas of the West and the Ibos of the East began to regard each other as rivals within the territory. Each of the two major ethnic groups in Southern Nigeria measured its progress in terms of the achievements of the other. For about fifty years before the Nationalists came to power, the two sections of the country had engaged in some healthy rivalry in modern development programmes particularly, in the field of education.

At the introduction of internal self-goverhment in Nigeria in 1951, a political party, the Action Group led by a Yoruba, came into power in the West, while the NCNC led by an Ibo was installed in power in the East. The Action Group came into existence as the political wing of a Yoruba tribal union, the Egbe Omo Oduduwa (the association of the Yoruba children of Oduduwa).<sup>6</sup> For this reason, the initial support of the party

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<sup>6</sup>For further details on the origin of the Action Group, see Zik: A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, op. cit. 326-7; Coleman, J.S., Nigeria: Background to Nationalism, pp. 343-50; and Awo: The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Cambridge University Press, 1960, pp. 216-222.

was drawn from among the Yorubas in particular. Furthermore, the Action Group worked in close association with the Egbe Omo Oduduwa which had earlier been in great rivalry with its Ibo counterpart - the Ibo State Union.<sup>7</sup>

In the case of the NCNC, it was formed through the activities of an all Nigerian Union of Students with a Yoruba, Mr. Herbert Macaulay as its first National President. At his death, he was succeeded by Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe.<sup>8</sup> About the same time, the Ibo State Union became affiliated to the NCNC.<sup>9</sup> Partly on account of this, the party drew a sizeable proportion of its support from among the people of Eastern Nigeria.

In the above circumstances, each of the two political parties became identified with the tribal union of the ethnic group from which it derived most of its support. The two parties also became rivals in the same way as the Egbe Omo Oduduwa and the Ibo State Union had been in the past.

At the national level, the two parties were dedicated to the achievement of political independence for Nigeria. But outside that, their ethnic base appeared to have intensified the rivalry between the two tribal groups. Each of them was committed to the development of its home base and measured its achievements in terms of what the other had done.

It was in the above context that Chief Awolowo expressed concern over what he regarded as the higher level of development in the East as compared with the West. Writing later, in 1960, on the position as of 1952 soon after his party came to power in the Western Region, he said inter alia:

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<sup>7</sup> A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, op. cit. p. 326.

<sup>8</sup> ibid., pp. 179-81.

<sup>9</sup> Coleman, J.S. op.cit. pp. 264-5.

"Above all, the level at which we had to start to provide for our people those modern amenities which we had promised them was very low indeed - much lower in many cases than in the Eastern Region with which the Western Region had always engaged in healthy competition in such matters . . . Whilst about 65 per cent of the children of school-going age were attending primary schools in the Eastern Region, only about 35 per cent were doing so in the West. Besides, as against 105 secondary grammar schools in the Eastern Region there were only 25 in the West.<sup>10</sup> In other words, per million of population, there were only 6 secondary schools in the West as compared with 20 in the East".<sup>11</sup>

It was partly to catch up with the East that soon after the Action Group came to power in the West, in 1951, it announced that Universal Primary Education scheme would be introduced throughout the Region in January, 1955. There was a period of three years, 1951-54 to prepare for the scheme. At the time the announcement was made, the NCNC was the opposition party in the Western House of Assembly while the Action Group in alliance with other minor parties, formed the opposition in the East.

Two years later, in 1953, the NCNC Government in the East under the leadership of Professor Eze Ita, announced that "by the end of 1956, Universal Primary Education scheme will have been introduced over the greater part of the Region". The policy paper issued by the Azikiwe Government in 1954 also reaffirmed that by December, 1956 the scheme would have been introduced "into all parts of the Region" (see chapter 5.4.2 and 3).

Thus it can be seen that because of an old rivalry between the West and the East, and between the Action Group and the NCNC, once the Government of Western Region introduced a Universal Primary Education scheme there, the NCNC Government in the East would come under great political pressure to follow suit. Unless this was done, the party might lose the confidence and the support of the illiterate masses who had voted it into

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<sup>10</sup> Chief Awolowo's figures were in respect of 1952. However, the Dike Commission Report (p. 14) gave the number of secondary schools in the East on that date as 52 including Commercial secondary schools. The Western Region's Annual Abstract of Education Statistics 1953-58, gave the number for 1952 as 43. p. 12.

<sup>11</sup> The Autobiography of Chief Obafemi Awolowo, op. cit. p. 262.

power partly on the promise of more educational opportunities for their children.

The UPE scheme in the West was actually launched in January, 1955. Soon after that date, the NCNC Government in the East started plans for the introduction of a similar scheme throughout the Region with effect from January, 1957.

Detailed proposals for the UPE scheme in the East were announced in May 1956, and preparations for its introduction the following January were started almost immediately.<sup>12</sup> One of the outstanding features of the scheme as it was announced was its extension to cover all the eight primary school grades instead of confining it to the first four in the first instance as was originally proposed by the Eyo Ita administration in 1953. Other provisions were the total abolition of the payment of fees in all the classes; the financing of the entire scheme by the Regional Government and not on 55/45 per cent basis between it and the Local Authorities as was earlier proposed; and the abolition of the education rating introduced in parts of the Region in 1950.<sup>13</sup>

In retrospect, it is surprising that the Eastern Nigerian Government should have decided to embark on the scheme on such an ambitious scale considering the comparatively limited financial resources of the Region. The probable explanation for this may be found in a number of other developments taking place in the Region about the same time. They included the Eastern Nigeria Finance Law which came into force on April 1, 1956; a major political crisis which started developing within the NCNC party and government in 1955 and which led to the dissolution of the House of

<sup>12</sup> See Eastern Region of Nigeria: Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Official Report, Vol. 1. 5th to 9th May, 1956 Government Printer, Enugu, 1957, p.10.

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Annual Report 1956, p. 2.

Assembly two years later; the anticipated missionary opposition to the new educational policies of the Government; and the view that the Azikiwe leadership considered it inconsistent to proceed with the original UPE plan nurtured and produced by the discredited Eyo Ita Government and its expatriate civil servant supporters.

Under the new Finance Law of 1956, per capita tax was raised from a flat rate of about 10s: 6d to £1:7s:6d. The rate of tax for incomes above £100 per annum was similarly increased. The new rates applied "to all male African sixteen years of age and over, and to females sixteen years of age and over residing in or carrying on business in specified local government council areas whose income was in excess of £100 per annum".<sup>14</sup> It was hoped that the proceeds of the new Finance Law "will enable the Government to bear all the charges now met by education rating . . ."<sup>15</sup>

Secondly, before the announcement of the detailed proposals for the UPE scheme, it was generally well known that another major political crisis was developing within the NCNC party and the Regional Government. In 1955, the Eastern Nigerian Government had set up a commission of inquiry to investigate allegations of bribery and corruption by some highly placed public servants. The report of the commission published in August, 1955, found Mazi Mbonu Ojike, the Regional Minister of Finance, guilty of corrupt practices in the award of public contracts. He was immediately called upon to resign his ministerial appointment by the Regional Premier, Dr. Azikiwe.

The NCNC party was divided on the way the case of Ojike had been handled.

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<sup>14</sup>See Okigibo, P.N.C.; Nigerian Public Finance, op. cit. pp. 99-103; see also the whole of Eastern Nigeria Finance Law 1956, Official Document No. 1 of 1956. Government Printer, Enugu.

<sup>15</sup>Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Official Report Vol. 1. 5th to 9th March, 1956 op. cit. p. 10.

The group supporting him was led by Mr. E.O. Eyo, the party chief whip and deputy speaker in the Eastern House of Assembly and Chairman of the Region's Development Corporation. A month after Ojike resigned from the Government, Mr. Eyo tabled a motion in the Eastern House of Assembly on 30th April, 1956 alleging the association of Dr. Azikiwe, the Regional Premier, with the African Continental Bank (ACB). It was alleged that the Premier had used his official position to influence the investment of substantial amounts of Eastern Nigeria public funds into his personal bank, the ACB.

Subsequently, Mr. Eyo resigned from the NCNC and called on the Colonial Government to appoint a commission of inquiry to investigate his allegations. The Colonial Secretary, Mr. Allan Lennox-Boyd, took up the call, and on July 24, 1956, announced in the British House of Commons that he had decided to appoint a commission of inquiry into the banking affairs in the Eastern Region of Nigeria. At first, the Regional Executive Council led by Dr. Azikiwe, was vehemently opposed to the proposed commission. In spite of this opposition, the formal institution of the Commission was announced in August, 1956. The Chief Justice of the Federation, Sir Stafford Foster-Sutton was appointed to be its Chairman.<sup>16</sup>

The Commission's terms of reference were to inquire "into Allegations of Improper Conduct by the Premier of the Eastern Region of Nigeria in connection with the affairs of the African Continental Bank Limited and other related matters". It sat in Lagos between August and November, 1956. In its report published on the 16th of January, 1957, the Commission concluded inter alia:

"In considering whether Dr. Azikiwe has been guilty of improper conduct, in his capacity as a Minister in connection with the affairs of the African Continental

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<sup>16</sup> Ezera, K., Constitutional Development in Nigeria, op. cit. pp. 229-231.



Bank, we apply what we think would be the standards of right-thinking citizens, unbiased by their political opinions. Applying that test, we consider his conduct in this matter has fallen short of the expectations of honest, reasonable people".

The Tribunal was further of the opinion that Dr. Azikiwe had used his position as the Premier of the Region to cause £30,000 of public funds to be deposited into his personal bank, the ACB, and to get the Regional Finance Corporation to buy shares in the Bank. All these together "made Azikiwe's investments in the Bank and the Zik Group of Companies more secure".<sup>17</sup> In effect the Premier was said to be guilty of official misconduct.

Instead of Dr. Azikiwe resigning from the Government as would normally have been the case, the NCNC party decided in January, 1957 that the Eastern House of Assembly be dissolved to enable it to go back to the electorates for a fresh mandate. Fresh elections were fixed for 15th March, 1957.

The relevance of the political crisis and its aftermath lies in the general belief that the NCNC leadership had anticipated the dissolution of the House of Assembly before the detailed proposals for the UPE scheme were announced a month after Mr. E.O. Eyo made his allegations against the Regional Premier. To make the scheme less generous might alienate some support from the party during the anticipated regional election. On this assumption, it is believed that the party decided to use the offer of eight-year fee-free primary education to ensure the continued support of the people in spite of the findings of the Foster-Sutton Commission. After the party had been returned to power, it will then be time to face the financial realities of the scheme.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The Report of the Tribunal of Inquiry on Official Misconduct of the Premier of Eastern Nigeria (Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe). 1956. Cmd. 51. Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London. p. 42; see also Coleman, J.S., Nigeria: Background to Nationalism op. cit. pp. 374-5 and 473.

<sup>18</sup> See Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. pp. 179-180.

Thirdly, the importance attached to education as a vote-catching item at the 1957 Regional elections was reflected by the Manifestos of the major political parties. After presenting to the people the "wonderful offer" of free education for their children as one of its achievements for the Region, the NCNC Manifesto went on to enumerate the religious rights of parents under the scheme. It stated *inter alia*:

"The NCNC Government has guaranteed freedom of religious beliefs under the Universal Primary Education Scheme by granting to parents: (1) the right to choose the schools which their children are to attend; (2) the right to choose the classes for religious instruction (in local government primary schools) which their children are to attend".<sup>19</sup>

In its own Manifesto, the Action Group and its allies in the Region promised that if voted into power, its government would introduce an educational programme which would "guarantee that our educational institutions are thoroughly imbued with a Christian atmosphere". Furthermore, the Parties would launch a free universal primary education, "allow the Voluntary Agencies (i.e. the Missions) to open and run their schools under the scheme, guarantee the parents' right to choose schools for their children".<sup>20</sup>

The emphasis on religious freedom and the right of the Missions to open and run their schools under the scheme, underline the seriousness of the controversy raging at the time between the Missionary Societies and the East Regional Government over its policies on the opening of new primary schools and religious instruction in schools. We shall return to these points when we examine the implementation of the scheme itself.

Fourthly, it will be recalled that the 1953 policy proposals on the UPE scheme was prepared by the discredited Eyo Ita Government. But under the new NCNC Government led by Dr. Azikiwe, it might have been thought that it would be inconsistent to go ahead with a plan nurtured and produced by the discredited 'rebels' and their expatriate civil servant supporters no matter how reasonable and realistic such a plan might have been.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup>Price, J.H. "The Eastern Region of Nigeria, March 1957" in Mackenzie, W.J., and R. Kenneth (eds.), Five Elections in Africa, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1960, p.125.

<sup>20</sup>ibid., p.129.

<sup>21</sup>Interview with Mr. R.I. Uzoma, Minister of Education, Eastern Nigeria, 1951-53. Enugu, 28th November, 1975.

In retrospect, it has also been suggested that the masses had to be convinced that the new leadership was their real friend, and that the original proposals by the so-called 'rebels' and their foreign supporters were less than the people actually deserved. This suggestion is shared by one of the NCNC leaders at the time, Mr. V.C. Ikeotuonye<sup>22</sup> and a leading Nigerian educationist, Professor A.B. Fafunwa.<sup>23</sup>

Based on the background to the UPE scheme as outlined above, it seems that the decision to launch it and the final form it took, were influenced very much more by political considerations, and that these were allowed to override the dictates of economic prudence. The economic implications would seem to have been left to be sorted out after its immediate political objectives had been achieved, and also not to have been seriously considered beforehand. There was only the vague hope that the new Tax Law of the Government passed in 1956, would generate enough funds to pay for the proposed fee-free primary education for all the classes. But considering the facts at the disposal of the Government at the time, it is doubtful that it actually believed that the new Tax Law could finance the scheme. Commenting on this point two years later the Dike Commission Report stated:

"In actual fact, the new amount on capitation tax of 30s, or under, was less than the total tax plus the rate hitherto paid. Moreover, the regional Government paid out much of the money collected in tax back to local government bodies in the form of grants. In 1957, of the £2.1 million collected by taxation, £2 million was paid to local government bodies. And yet the Government still had to make provision for free primary education".<sup>24</sup>

Since the Government knew that the new "capitation tax of 30s or under was less than the total tax plus the rate hitherto paid", it is

<sup>22</sup>See Ikeotuonye, V.C., Zik of Africa, op. cit. p. 182.

<sup>23</sup>See Fafunwa, A.B., History of Education in Nigeria op. cit. pp. 170-1.

<sup>24</sup>Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 9.

difficult to understand how it had expected that the new Finance Law could generate enough funds to pay for the scheme. It is for this reason that one could suggest that the economic prudence of the scheme might not have been seriously considered and that the party's concern at the time would appear to have been partly to use the scheme to boost its chances at the polls, and to sort out its financial implications thereafter. In view of the pressures on the party at the time, such a strategy might have been considered politically expedient inspite of what might be its after-effects. In the end, the NCNC won the election with an increased majority, and then began to face the financial implications of the scheme more squarely.

#### 7.2.2 The Universal Primary Education Scheme 1957

Preparations for the UPE scheme were started in May 1956. Right from the beginning, it was beset with a number of major problems. In the first place, time was too short. For instance, while the Western Region had devoted three years to prepare for its own, the East had less than one year to prepare for its more gigantic UPE scheme. This was because of its series of political crises leading to frequent change of Government between 1953 and 1957.

Two, many of the top civil servants who were to plan and implement the scheme, were the same expatriate officials whose relationship with the NCNC leadership was not very cordial. The well-meaning warning of the officials that the economy of the Region was not in a position to support a full-eight year fee-free primary education course was misconstrued by the politicians as support for, and sympathy with, the moderate proposals of the discredited Eyo Ita Government. For this reason, the NCNC leadership rejected the officials' advice and warning on the UPE scheme.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>See Abernethy, D.B. The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. pp. 144-163.

Three, the policy of the Government was that all new primary schools were to be established and managed only by the Local Government Councils. No Voluntary Agency would be allowed to open any more new primary schools in the Region. This was unlike the policy in the West. The above decision by the Protestant dominated Government of Dr. Azikiwe was seen by the Catholics as aimed at restricting the further expansion of their influence in the Region through the establishment of more schools. The Catholic members of the NCNC were openly opposed to the policy decision. In the end, the rank and file of the party was sharply divided along religious lines on this particular issue.<sup>26</sup> It was on account of this policy that the opposition parties stressed in their Manifesto that if voted into power, they would allow the Missionary societies "to open and run their schools under the scheme".

Four, unlike the West where all the interest groups in education were duly consulted by the Regional Government before launching its UPE scheme, it would appear that there was very little consultation between the NCNC Government of the East on one hand, and the Voluntary Agencies and the Teachers' Union on the other. The Regional Board of Education was not even consulted. In fact, it never met for the whole of 1956 and 1957. There was indeed, a complete breakdown of communication between the Government and the Voluntary Agencies which controlled almost all the primary schools already in existence.<sup>27</sup>

The failure to consult the Voluntary Agencies adequately was deliberate. In the first place, the Nationalists were not friendly disposed towards the expatriate Missionaries which in particular, dominated the RCM hierarchy. Secondly, it was the policy of the Government "to reduce

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<sup>26</sup>ibid., p. 165.

<sup>27</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

the influence of the Voluntary Agencies both among the populace and at the policy-making level". The party leaders believed that if the Voluntary Agencies were consulted, that would further strengthen their position in the machinery of government and would also necessitate some concessions being made to them by the Regional Government. To avoid both possibilities, there was little or no consultation with the Voluntary Agencies on the scheme.<sup>28</sup>

For some political considerations, too, the Nigeria Union of Teachers (NUT) was not consulted. In the first place, Dr. Alvan Ikoku, an Easterner, was the National President of the Union. He was one of the discredited former leaders of the NCNC following the 1953 political crisis. At the time preparations for the UPE were being made, Ikoku was a member of one of the opposition parties in the East. The General Secretary of the Union, Mr. E.E. Esua also an Easterner came from Calabar which at this time, was known to be a stronghold of the Action Group in the East. It is pertinent to recall that Professor Eyo Ita, the leader of the Regional Government ousted in 1953 was from Calabar.

Finally, because the NUT leadership had in the past, pursued a policy of active co-operation with the Colonial Government in educational matters, the NCNC leaders in the East projected Ikoku and Esua to the people as "Colonial stooges". By 1964, for example, the two men had respectively been awarded the British OBE and CBE.<sup>29</sup>

Despite these problems, the registration of children for the UPE scheme was conducted by the Local Government Councils and the Regional Ministry of Education. At the close of it in May 1956, a total of 481,691 children had been registered.<sup>30</sup> They were distributed among the Provinces as follows:

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<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, p. 168.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, p. 167.

<sup>30</sup> Ministry of Education: Education in the Eastern Region with Special Reference to Universal Primary Education. Nigerian Printing and Publishing Company, Lagos, n.d. p.3.

|         |     |     |                |
|---------|-----|-----|----------------|
| Calabar | ... | ... | 109,017        |
| Ogoja   | ... | ... | 43,443         |
| Onitsha | ... | ... | 139,998        |
| Owerri  | ... | ... | 147,702        |
| Rivers  | ... | ... | 41,531         |
| Total   |     |     | <u>481,691</u> |

According to the Government policy, these children were to be accommodated partly in the existing schools and partly in the new ones to be established and managed by the Local Government Councils. The Voluntary Agency schools were to take in January, 1957, the same number of Infant Class I streams as they had in January, 1956. By this arrangement, 299,487 or 62.2 per cent of the registered children were accommodated in existing schools mainly owned by the Missionary Societies.

In all, 1,516 new Local Authority schools were given approval to open for the remaining 182,204 children.<sup>31</sup> The Government policy here was that "these schools should be open to any child, regardless of his religious denomination."<sup>32</sup>

As an interim measure any Local Government Council which could not initially manage its own schools was permitted to hand them over to a Voluntary Agency decided upon by the Council.<sup>33</sup> This was to be done on the understanding that the Council would take back the management of all such schools as soon as it was in a position to do so.

The implication of restricting the Voluntary Agency Schools to the number of streams they had in 1956 would be to prevent them from expanding beyond their existing capacity. This was consistent with the overall

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<sup>31</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>32</sup> *ibid.*, p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

Government policy of reducing missionary influence in educational matters.

However, the Voluntary Agencies were free to open purely private primary schools of their own. All such schools would be free to charge fees as no grants would be made to them from public funds. Parents were free to send their children either to the non-fee paying public schools or to the private fee-paying ones,<sup>34</sup> a provision similar to the practice in such other countries as the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand. In addition, "Religious instruction given in such schools would be solely under the control of the proprietor, who could refuse admission to any child on religious grounds. Whereas such refusal is not permitted in a grant-aided school".<sup>35</sup>

Finally, in future, all prospective student-teachers were to be directly bonded to the Regional Government which would also ensure stricter control over the establishment of teacher training institutions.<sup>36</sup> This would have the effect of greater Government control of the teachers in the same way as the provision of a Disciplinary Council for them in the Education Law, 1956.

### 7.2.3 The Reactions of the Agencies to the Proposals under the UPE scheme.

#### A. The Roman Catholic Mission

The first reaction to the proposed Government educational measures came from the Roman Catholic Mission. Its weekly newspaper, The Leader, in its issue of 19th May, 1956, carried an article on its front page urging all Catholic parents not to register their children for the UPE scheme in a "non-Catholic school" for any reason whatsoever. In its editorial column, the paper said inter alia:

"If you want your child to go to heaven  
to see God, register him in a Catholic school".<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> ibid., pp. 5-6.

<sup>35</sup> ibid., p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> ibid., pp. 11-12; see also Annual Report 1957, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup> The Leader, May 19, 1956, p.1.



As far as the Mission was concerned, it would not allow the children of its members to be enrolled in any of the schools to be controlled and managed by the Local Government Councils.

Three days after the above publication, the Catholic Bishops of Eastern Nigeria met to decide their stand on the proposed UPE scheme. In a statement issued after the meeting, the Bishops declared that in principle, the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria was not opposed to the introduction of UPE in the Region. But on the other hand, the Church was strongly opposed to the policy of not allowing the Voluntary Agencies to establish new primary schools within the public system.

On the issue of assigning children who could not be accommodated in existing Voluntary Agency schools to the new Local Authority ones, the Bishops maintained that the policy amounted to denying parents the right to choose schools for their children. The Bishops went on:

"This right is entirely fundamental. Children belong to their parents by natural law, and parents are responsible before God for their proper upbringing and education. They cannot fulfil this responsibility unless they are free to choose the agency or Mission to which they give their children. Freedom to choose a school for one's children is an essential freedom. It should not be removed by any Government."<sup>38</sup>

The statement also pointed out that the RCM was opposed to the bonding of prospective student teachers directly to the Regional Government and not to the Missionary Societies as was the practice before the introduction of self-government. The Catholic bishops added that they were convinced from the provisions of the Education Law 1956 and the policy directives so far made public, that the Government was about to take over the control of the entire primary school system. If that were true, the Bishops would like to make it clear that the RCM was opposed to any such measure.

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<sup>38</sup> Catholic Bishops of Eastern Nigeria: "A Short Note from Catholic Bishops on Universal Primary Education" issued May 22, 1956 and published in The Leader, June 9, 1956.

With the announcement of the RCM reaction to the Government's directives under the UPE scheme, the campaign against it was stepped up by the Catholic weekly newspaper, The Leader. For instance, its editorial column of June 9, 1956, declare inter alia:

"If we accept this first step (the policy of new primary schools to be established only by the Local Government Councils) without protest, the second and third steps will provide a 'full education service' which will exclude our Catholic religion from all grant-aided schools. The loss of Catholic education will be followed inevitably by the loss of Faith".

In addition to its traditional attitude towards state control of education, the RCM in Eastern Nigeria had another reason for its apparent hard line on the UPE scheme. Earlier, the Mission had got its members in the Region to raise an estimated amount of half a million pounds for the establishment of new primary schools in anticipation of the increased enrolment to be followed by the introduction of the UPE scheme. The Mission had also assured its members that the amount would be recovered from the Regional Government in the form of building grants. But when the Government announced that all the new schools were to be established and managed by the Local Government Councils and that all building grants would go to them, the Catholics were bitterly disappointed.

One of the members of the Eastern House of Assembly, Mr. P.N. Okeke and a Catholic by religion took up the matter with the Government on the floor of the House. He criticized the policy of not allowing the Voluntary Agencies to open any more new primary schools and of not making building grants to them from public funds. It was the view of his Mission, according to the Honourable Member, that the Government should rescind the policy and also restore building grants to the Voluntary Agencies.<sup>39</sup>

Starting with the above series of incidents the conflict between the Church and the State had developed into a struggle. The former employed

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<sup>39</sup> Eastern House of Assembly, Parliamentary Debates 1955-1958, April 1, 1957. Government Printer, Enugu, p.123, see also Price, J.A. "The Eastern Region of Nigeria, March 1957" in Five Elections in Africa, op. cit. p.111.

different weapons at its disposal to resist the attempts by the latter to reduce its power for action and influence in educational matters. For instance, the RCM made use of all available media to sustain its opposition to the implementation of the policy directives and its pressure on the Government. The Mission published a pamphlet entitled Catholic Case in Eastern Nigeria and distributed thousands of copies free to the general public urging them to stand firm by the Church in defence of the rights of parents to choose schools for their children.

The educational policies of the Government were alleged to have been openly attacked and condemned by Catholic Priests from the pulpit. From there too, they were also alleged to have denounced the new Local Government schools as 'godless' and threatened to ex-communicate any of its members who allowed his child to be enrolled in any of them.<sup>40</sup> In addition the Mission organised mass demonstrations in different parts of the Region at different dates. The first one was held in Port Harcourt on 30th September, 1956.<sup>41</sup> In each of them, thousands of Catholic women marched through the streets and later passed resolutions calling on the Government to lift its ban on the establishment of new primary schools by the Voluntary Agencies.

Furthermore, the RCM organised village elders in different parts of the Region to write petitions to the Premier, Dr. Azikiwe urging him to withdraw the new education policy. For example, the Chiefs and Elders of Ndi-Elu, Nkporo in Bende Division, were believed to have been organised by the Catholic Priest there to write and forward such a petition to the Premier through the Minister of Education. A part of it read as follows:

"The people of Nkporo as a whole have been supporters of NCNC your party and its leadership, because it is the party which caters for the welfare and development of every

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<sup>40</sup> The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 44.

<sup>41</sup> Abernethy, D.B. The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. p. 174.

town and Division in Nigeria. In view of the above facts and our implicit confidence in the party, we have all hope that the Government which it leads will not give a deaf-ear to our humble and immediate demand, i.e. the approval of the Catholic School in our town before December, 1956."<sup>42</sup>

Similar petitions were also addressed to the Premier from Awgu, Orlu, Oguta and Onitsha all Catholic strongholds.

With the pending elections into the Eastern House of Assembly, the RCM would seem to have decided to channel its numerical strength in the Region towards some political ends. This particular instrument had been effectively used against one of its outspoken critics earlier in 1951.

Mazi Mbonu Ojike, one of the prominent leaders of the NCNC and a Protestant was known as one of the outspoken critics of the Mission especially, in educational matters. Just before the 1951 elections, he had severely criticized the Church through his weekly column, "The Weekend Catechism" in the West African Pilot, a national newspaper owned by Dr. Azikiwe. For this reason, the RCM authorities urged one of their members to contest the election as an independent candidate against Ojike in his constituency. The Church supported and campaigned openly for the independent candidate. In the end, Ojike was defeated by his unknown Catholic opponent. After the above incident "The Weekend Catechism" was never published again.<sup>43</sup>

For purposes of bringing greater political pressure to bear on the Government therefore, in December 1956, the RCM launched an organisation known as "The Eastern Catholic Council". It was to be the political wing of the Church. The organisation went round the Region campaigning openly for Catholic candidates for the 1957 General Elections. Its

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<sup>42</sup>Quoted in ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>43</sup>See Oloko, Tunde, "Religion and Politics in Nigeria" in West Africa, February 2, 1957, pp. 103 and 111.

activities were also in support of those who were standing as independents against Protestant official candidates of the NCNC.

To counter the activities of the organisation, the Protestant Mission came together and launched what they called "The Convention of Protestant Citizens" at Onitsha in February 1957. The Convention threw its weight on the side of the Government and in support of the NCNC official candidates for the coming elections. During the campaigns, there were many violent clashes between supporters of the Catholic Council and those of the Protestant Convention. At the height of the election fever, the latter issued a statement alleging that the RCM was plotting to overthrow the Regional Government by massively sponsoring many of its members to contest the elections against the official candidates of the ruling party, the NCNC.

The allegation was quickly denied by the Chairman of the Eastern Nigerian Catholic Council adding that all the same, the Church had instructed Roman Catholic voters to vote for "God-fearing capable men and women who will defend the right of parents to train their children according to their beliefs."<sup>44</sup> But inspite of the denial, it was widely known that the RCM was openly sponsoring some of its members as 'independents' to contest the elections all over the Region against official NCNC non-Catholic candidates. "Many people on the spot believed that the Mission was directly intervening in the politics of the Region".<sup>45</sup>

By denying the allegation of its plotting to overthrow the Government, while at the same time sponsoring many candidates against the NCNC non-Catholic official candidates, the RCM made an effective use of the principle of not using force where the threat of it can achieve the desired end. That was good politics. With its numerical strength,

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<sup>44</sup>Price, J.H., "The Eastern Region of Nigeria, March 1957" in Five Elections in Africa, op. cit. p. 112.

<sup>45</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

influence and power in the Region, the RCM was capable of contesting all the seats if it so desired. It could also have possibly won the elections and that would have been the end of the educational policy directives which were unacceptable to the Mission. But in the mean time, the Church would appear to be content to remind its opponents of that grim possibility, and see how far that could go. The subsequent response of the Government would suggest that the message was not lost on its leaders.

Again, on the 26th of January, 1957, The Leader carried an "Editorial" entitled "Ministry (of Education) Versus Pope". It rejected the Government policy on the scheme and stressed

"that the mere fact that religious instruction is given in a school does not make it satisfy the rights of the Church and the family, nor render it fit to be attended by Catholic pupils... The Church has the right and duty of watching over any education given to Catholics and this vigilance extends to all subjects taught and regulations imposed".

In conclusion, the article emphasized that it was the duty of the Government to give financial assistance to the Church in education and that any attempt to repudiate the rights of the Church was "manifest blasphemy" and "fatal to the civil society itself". Finally, it urged all Catholics in the Region to follow to direction of "His Holiness the Pope, Representative of Jesus Christ on this Earth" in all educational matters and not the Ministry of Education with its anti-religious obsession".<sup>46</sup>

On the whole, the position of the Mission on the UPE scheme as outlined above and its memorandum to the Dike Commission (see chapter 7.3), show clearly that the RCM was opposed to any extension of state control of education beyond the traditional prescription of standards and the making of grants to qualified Voluntary Agency schools.

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<sup>46</sup>The Leader, "Editorial Comment" January 26, 1957, p.1.

### B. The Protestant Missions

The "Convention of Protestant Citizens" was formed as a counter force to "The Eastern Catholic Council". While the latter campaigned against the non-Catholic official NCNC candidates for the 1957 general elections, the former supported them. By this, the Protestants were on the side of the ruling party and this too, would suggest a de facto acceptance of the policies the Catholics were opposed to.

The spokesman of the Protestant Missions during the UPE controversy was the CMS, the second largest denomination and also the main rival to the RCM in the Region. The declared position of its leaders was that the CMS

"would sooner have secular education for all than all the dominant Church (the RCM) to run its own schools".<sup>47</sup>

As the disagreement between the Catholics and the Government became more serious, a meeting of the EEAC was convened at Aba on Thursday, 13th September 1956, to discuss what should be the common stand of the Protestant Missions on the UPE scheme, as proposed by the Government. At the meeting,

"It was generally agreed that we should co-operate as fully as possible with the Government's plans for universal education".<sup>48</sup>

The meeting also mandated the CMS to issue a public statement on the UPE scheme on behalf of the Protestant Missions. A part of it read as follows:

"We, in the past, in common with other Churches have used our schools as one of the means of spreading the Christian Faith which we believe to be the true way of life for all. We shall naturally be sorry to see these opportunities restricted in future, but we recognise that

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<sup>47</sup>Price, J.H. "The Eastern Region of Nigeria, March 1957", in Five Elections in Africa, op. cit. pp. 112-113.

<sup>48</sup>The Christian Council of Nigeria, Eastern Education Advisory Committee: Minutes of Meeting Held at Aba, Thursday, September 13th, 1956.

when education is provided universally at public expense the Churches cannot claim to continue to control nearly all the schools".<sup>49</sup>

From the above agreement and statement and unlike the RCM, the Protestant Missions accepted that it was logical for the state to play a more active role in the control of a school system largely financed from public funds. On the other hand, the position of the RCM was that education was the divine right of the Church and that the State was duty bound to provide it with the necessary funds for performing that task. According to the Catholics, for the state to do otherwise, was "manifest blasphemy". Thus, consistent with their tradition in Western Europe and elsewhere, the Protestants were as flexible in Eastern Nigeria as the RCM was rigid and uncompromising on state control of education.

On the question of assigning the overflow of children to the new Local Authority schools, the same statement by the CMS declared:

"We do not feel it right to claim that all parents who registered their children at a Church school were conscientiously insisting that there alone must their children be educated. In many places they had no option but to register at one denominational school or another".<sup>50</sup>

Thus, the Protestant Missions would allow the children of their members who could not be accommodated in their existing schools to be assigned to the new Local Government schools. But according to the statement by the Catholic Bishops, the fact that a parent had registered his child in a school meant that the child must be educated in that school and in no other one. The Protestant Missions disagreed with this view.

Finally, while the Protestant Missions were apparently on the side of the Government and appealing to all concerned to avoid unnecessary

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<sup>49</sup>CMS Education Office, Owerri: "Statement by the Education Authorities of the Niger Diocese on Educational Policy". Mimeographed Document dated October 1956.

<sup>50</sup>ibid., loc. cit.



controversy over the new education programme, some of their Education Secretaries complained against the new policy of limiting building grants to the Local Government Councils only and denying them to the Missionary Societies. Others among the Secretaries doubted the honesty and the competence of the Local Governments Councils to manage the new schools. But these complaints and doubts were only muted. All the same, the overriding consideration of the Protestants would appear to have been "an appreciation of the government's purpose and a recognition that Christian missions could no longer monopolize Nigerian education".<sup>51</sup>

The Protestant Missions in general were also aware that if the new Government policies were fully implemented, they too would lose the control of their schools. On the other hand, the Catholics would lose more because they had more educational institutions than the Protestants. Thus, in addition to their traditional more liberal attitude, there was the consideration of having to choose between Catholic domination and secular education. As the Minutes of EEAC Aba Meeting of November 1955 reveal, they would rather support secular education and if need be, lose the control of their schools in order to prevent Catholic domination. This would appear to be the bed-rock of their stand on the major issues involved.

#### C. The Local Government Councils

The reaction of the Local Government Councils, who were intended to become more involved in the management of primary schools on behalf of the Regional Government, was mixed. In Catholic dominated local council areas, the people took the same stand as their Church and opposed future

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<sup>51</sup> Abernethy, D.B., op. cit., p. 172.

development of primary education being restricted to the Local Authorities only. For example, in such Administrative Divisions as Awgu, Oguta and Orlu, where the Catholics were in the majority, the Councils petitioned the Government urging it to lift the ban on Voluntary Agencies opening new primary schools.

But in Protestant dominated council areas, the new policy directives were accepted and implemented. For instance, in such places like Calabar Province, twenty-eight out of its thirty-one District Councils, and in Owerri Province, nineteen out of its twenty-three resolved that all the new primary schools in those places were to be directly managed by the Councils.

In a Province like Onitsha where the Catholics and the Protestants were equally matched in numerical strength, individual Councils passed resolutions handing over the management of its schools to the dominant denomination to which the majority of the councillors invariably belonged to.<sup>52</sup> The argument was that if the neighbouring council had handed over its schools to the Catholics because they were in the majority there, why should the Protestants not do the same where they were in the majority or vice versa. It was along this line of reasoning that ten of the twelve District Councils in Onitsha Province passed resolutions handing over the management of their primary schools to one or the other of the rival Christian denominations.

The remaining two Local Government Councils in the Onitsha Province were the Urban Councils of Enugu and Onitsha towns. In both places, the schools were directly managed by the Councils without handing them over to any of the rival denominations. The reason for this was because in both urban centres, the Catholic and the Protestant members of the Councils were so equally matched that neither side could have successfully sponsored a resolution to hand over the management of the schools to either of the

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<sup>52</sup> See Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 47.

two religious camps.<sup>53</sup>

In the case of the generality of the populace, particularly in the rural areas, their reaction was equally influenced by their religious affiliation. The example of Ndi-Elu Nkporo people was a typical illustration of this point. Generally speaking therefore, all sections of the community in the Region, the Government, the Missionary Societies, the Local Government Councils and the local communities were involved in the dispute. Each of them took sides with one or the other of the major disputants. No one of them was on the fence.

#### 7.2.4 The Regional Government Response

At first, the Regional Government seemed determined to press ahead with the implementation of its educational policies inspite of the protests by the Catholics. This indication was contained in a broadcast made on behalf of the Government by Mr. I.U. Akpabio, the Minister of Education on the 27th December, 1956. In it, he said inter alia:

"It is to be deplored that the success of this magnificent undertaking, which is for the benefit of the whole Region, should be threatened at this late hour by suggestions for fundamental changes in Government's policy, backed by demonstrations by certain sections of the community. It has now been definitely decided to implement the scheme for Universal Primary Education on the lines of the policy previously made public .."<sup>54</sup>

But as the protests and pressures from the RCM leaders and members continued to mount, the Government seemed to have become really worried and embarrassed. This was more so in view of the fact at the peak of the

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<sup>53</sup>Price, J.H., "Eastern Region of Nigeria, March 1957", in Five Elections in Africa, op. cit., pp. 111-2; see also Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. p. 175.

<sup>54</sup>Education in Eastern Nigeria with Special Reference to Universal Primary Education, op. cit., p. 12.

Catholic mass demonstrations, petitions, press releases and resolutions by Local Government Councils, a crucial general election was just around the corner. Such a time would be definitely considered unsuitable for engaging in a serious controversy with the Mission whose members constituted a good proportion of the electorates whose votes the party needed to return to power.

Also to be considered were the circumstances under which the House was dissolved. To the NCNC party, the election was very important. It would like to demonstrate to the world at large that although what was then described as "a Colonial inspired Commission of Inquiry" had found its leader guilty of abuse of office, the party and its leadership still enjoyed the confidence and the support of the people. This was to be demonstrated by its being returned to power on the polling day.

There was also the fact that many members of the RCM were being made to stand as independents against the non-Catholic official candidates of the NCNC.

If therefore the party failed to reach some agreement with the Catholic Church and decided to press ahead with the educational policies, that could possibly rob it of the much needed victory at the polls. It would appear that it was for these considerations and also as future events seem to suggest, that the Government later adopted a conciliatory attitude towards the objections raised by the Catholics.

The first indication that the Government was going to yield some grounds to the RCM was contained in its sixteen-page pamphlet stating its own side to the case. This was published at the peak of the election campaigns. It started by denying the Catholic allegation that in the past, the Government had contributed very little towards educational development in the Region, and was therefore, attempting to reap where it did not sow by its new education policies.

The pamphlet quoted figures to show that the bulk of the expenditure

on education from public funds in the Region had always gone to the RCM since the end of World War II. Between 1946 and 1952 for example, the Colonial Government, under the Colonial Development and Welfare Plan, spent a total of £428,350 on the establishment of secondary and teacher training institutions and in equipping them. Of this amount spent in the Region, £226,000 or 52.8 per cent went to the RCM and the balance to all the Protestant Missions combined.<sup>55</sup>

It was also shown that the RCM had received the greater part of Government's grants-in-aid of education between 1952 and 56. In the last year for example, the Mission got £543,384 or 47 per cent of the Regional Government's total grant of £1,151,586 made for the salaries of primary school teachers in the Region. The remaining part of the total grant was shared by the Protestant Missions, the Local Government Councils and other educational agencies.<sup>56</sup>

In 1956 too, the Government made a grant of £178,443 in aid of secondary education in the Region. Of this amount, £105,580 or 59.3 per cent went to the RCM while the balance was shared by all the other agencies in the school system.

During the year too, the Government expended a total of £263,587 as grants to teacher training institutions in the Region. The RCM had £110,483 or 41.9 per cent of this amount. The rest of it was shared by the CMS, the Methodists, the CSM, the Local Government Councils and the other educational agencies.

Finally, on educational expenditure, the pamphlet pointed out that under the UPE scheme, the Government was providing a total of £500,000 as building grants to the Local Government Councils. Some other unspecified amount was also said to have been made available to the councils for the equipment of their new schools.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> ibid., p.8.

<sup>56</sup> ibid., p.6.

<sup>57</sup> ibid., p.7.

The above figures were released for two main reasons. The first was to refute the allegation that the Government had not contributed substantially towards the development of education in the Region. The second, according to the pamphlet, was to show that the Government had in no way discriminated against the Roman Catholic Mission in educational matters as was being suggested by the Catholics. It was further pointed out that the above figures showed that the RCM had consistently received huge sums of Government expenditure on education in the Region both before and after the assumption of political power by the Nationalists. It was therefore not true, according to the pamphlet, that the RCM had been discriminated against.

On the allegation that under the UPE scheme, the Government intended to take "the schools away from the Voluntary Agencies", the statement pointed out that of the approximately 6,500 primary schools which would be operating in the Region in 1957, roughly 5,000 of them would be "under Mission proprietorship and 1,500 under Local Authority proprietorship". In the circumstances, the Government declared that this allegation was "completely false".<sup>58</sup>

The Government defence on the above allegation was true at that material point in time. But what the RCM was protesting against among other things, was not the ownership of schools as of 1957, but the ultimate intentions of the Government, namely, restricting the Missionary Societies from establishing any new primary schools, and confining all future expansion in the hands of the local Government Councils as was contained in the Education Law 1956, which came into force on 1st January, 1957. The defence would therefore appear to have evaded the main point in dispute.

On the allegation that under the UPE scheme, religion was being relegated to the background and thus putting "God in a pigeon hole", the pamphlet denied it, and added that it could not be true in view of the

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<sup>58</sup> ibid., pp. 10-11.

provision that:

"No child will be compelled to take the religious instruction given in any particular school. Arrangements will be made for a child to receive the religious instruction of his parents' or guardians' choice regardless of the denomination of the school he attends".<sup>59</sup>

The tone and the detailed nature of the Government defence as outlined above reveal the great extent to which it was worried by the Catholic opposition to its educational policies. At every point, the defence re-emphasised that there had been no acts of discrimination against the Catholics in the past. As if to convince the Catholics that none was planned for the future, in February 1957, a month before the general elections, the Government convened a peace meeting between it and the leaders of the Church in the Region. Its outcome was the withdrawal of some of the controversial provisions of the policy directives and the suspension (as it later turned out to be), of the implementation of certain aspects of the Education Law 1956 which the Catholics had also objected to. The first in the series of concessions to the RCM was the lifting of the ban on the Voluntary Agencies from admitting more number of children in Infant Class I in 1957 than they had in 1956.

It will be recalled that the Catholics had "objected to Roman Catholic children who could not be placed in the existing Roman Catholic schools being diverted to the new District Council schools which were to be built to absorb the overflow". But in the end, the Catholic protests forced the Government to concede that all the Voluntary Agencies could increase "the Infant Class I intake to more than the maximum of three streams approved by the Government."<sup>60</sup>

Under the above concession, all the Missionary Societies were allowed "to remove some children of their denomination from the Local Authority

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<sup>59</sup> ibid., p. 2.

<sup>60</sup> Annual Report 1956, p.3.

schools into their own schools." As a result of this, about 100 of the 1,516 new Local Authority schools were rendered redundant ever before they were due to open in February, 1957.<sup>61</sup>

Another effect of the concession was that the Region lost at least £30,000 spent in constructing the classroom blocks of the 100 schools that never opened. The Government had made a grant of £300 to the Councils for putting up each of the new schools. Thus, the amount spent on the 100 schools was simply thrown down the drain.

The second major concession by the Government was the lifting of the ban on the establishment of new primary schools by the Voluntary Agencies. The Government agreed and granted them permission to open as many new primary schools as they applied for.<sup>62</sup> As a corollary to this concession, Government building grants to the Missions were also restored.

Finally, the new policy on the bonding of prospective student-teachers was also revised. They were to continue to be bonded to the Missionary Societies and not to the Government as was originally proposed. Even the teachers in Local Authority schools managed by the Missions were also to be bonded to the managing agency and not to the Local Government Councils which actually owned the schools.

The meeting between the Catholic leaders and the Government and the concessions to the Voluntary Agencies took place a month before the elections. Soon after the agreement was concluded, Dr. Azikiwe in his capacity as the Premier of the Region and the leader of the NCNC, made a broadcast to the people on the 9th of March, 1957. In it, he said among other things:

"In implementing our education policy, my Government did take pains to express appreciation of the constructive role of Missionaries in the education of our people".<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Annual Report 1957, p. 10.

<sup>62</sup> Annual Report 1956, p. 12; see Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. p. 176.

<sup>63</sup> A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, op. cit. p. 36.



The Premier quoted figures of the sums of money which his government had given as grants-in-aid to the various Voluntary Agencies in education and added:

"these figures are publicized in order that the electorate should appreciate that this Government does not discriminate against any religious organisation or denomination, as some people seem to imagine, judging by recent happenings in this Region".<sup>64</sup>

Furthermore, Dr. Azikiwe regretted the activities of the Catholic Council over the UPE scheme and observed that they had caused some embarrassment to his Government. He was however, happy to announce that

"Wise statesmanship on the part of His Grace Archbishop Heerey (of the RCM) and some spokesmen of our Government averted a misunderstanding which could have developed out of proportion".

The statement went on to say that the complaints of the Catholics had been fully investigated and personally attended to by the Premier himself. He expressed the hope that no candidate would introduce religion as one of the election issues as "that would not help the cause of Catholicism in this part of the country".<sup>65</sup>

The Premier reiterated that it was the policy of the NCNC Government

"to introduce a State system of education yet this must be realised on a co-operative basis with the Missionaries and other voluntary agencies".

He went on to say that as a practical demonstration of this policy of co-operation, the Education Law provided for

"religious freedom in respecting the fundamental rights of parents to choose schools which their children should attend, from a purely religious point of view".

The broadcast concluded by saying that there had been some

"misunderstanding between the Catholic authorities and the Government in implementing our education policy",

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<sup>64</sup> ibid., p. 37.

<sup>65</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

and added:

"I am happy to report that this has been resolved and the two parties are now working hand in hand in order to make this scheme a success".<sup>66</sup>

But inspite of the concessions by the Government, its peace meeting with the Catholic leaders and the appeal by the Premier, the RCM would seem not to have been satisfised with the terms of the settlement. For example, on the election day itself, The Leader carried a front page editorial part of which read as follows:

"It is an incontestable fact that the main issue at stake in the election is that of education. The natural rights of Catholics have been violated and their protestations ignored. They and their Church have been the object of a lie and smear campaign. On March 15th the religious future of their children is in their hands. After March the 15th it is in somebody else's".<sup>67</sup>

Moreover, the independent Catholic candidates, standing against the official ones of the NCNC party, did not withdraw after the concessions and the Premier's broadcast. When the election results were declared, it was generally well known that more Catholics had been elected than was the case in the dissolved House of Assembly.

All this together would suggest that the concessions by the Government and whatever agreements that were reached between it and the Catholic leaders were not accepted by the RCM as wholly satisfactory.

There is also the suggestion mentioned earlier that the concessions and the seemingly apologetic Government response to the Catholic opposition to its educational policies may have been partly motivated by some political considerations. For instance, before the 1957 general elections, the NCNC had adopted a great number of Catholics as its official candidates.

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<sup>66</sup> ibid., p. 38.

<sup>67</sup> The Leader, "Editorial Comment", March 15, 1957, p. 1.

In some cases, this was in preference to equally suitable Protestant candidates. Presumably, the reason for this was in recognition of the numerical strength of the Catholics and in order not to risk defeat, it was considered expedient to adopt as many Catholic candidates as possible.

Another incident which might not have been unconnected with the desire to placate the RCM and its members was the appointment of more Catholics into the new cabinet after the NCNC was returned to power. Six out of the fourteen new members of the cabinet were Catholics. In addition, the post of the Minister of Education was taken away from I.U. Akpabio, a Protestant and given to G.E. Okeke, a staunch Catholic. Whenever he was away from his seat, another Catholic, B.C. Okwu, a former outspoken critic of the educational policies of the previous cabinet, and in the new one, the substantive Minister of Information, was appointed to act for Chief Okeke.<sup>68</sup>

There is no direct evidence to show that the adoption of more Catholic candidates for the elections and the appointment of more of its members into the new cabinet were part of the agreement between the Catholic authorities and the Government. But realising that by the time the Foster-Sutton Tribunal Report was published in January, 1957 and the dissolution of the House soon after that, the controversies between the Mission and the Government over the UPE scheme, had been seriously on for more than six months. It is therefore likely that the Government decided to make peace with, and to appease the Catholics as a part of the campaign to be returned to power on the election day.

There are two other possible explanations for the Government measures. The first was to eliminate the idea of seeing the Regional Government as Protestant dominated and its policies as reflecting the non-Catholic point of view. The second was to bring about more Catholic representation

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<sup>68</sup>See Abernethy, D.B., *op. cit.*, p. 177.

and co-operation with the Government so as to ensure that the party in power had the support of all sections of the community.

The suggestion that the RCM appeared not to have been satisfied with the settlement reached before the elections is further reinforced by later events. For instance, on several occasions when the Mission felt that its requests had not been favourably responded to by the Government, one of its ordinary members in the Eastern House of Assembly would take up the matter on the floor of the House. This role was played for the Mission by Chief B.C. Okwu before he was appointed a cabinet Minister. Thereafter, he was succeeded by another Catholic member of the House, Mr. P.N. Okeke (not related to the new Minister of Education).

For example, late in 1957 when the Mission felt that some of its applications for permission to open new primary schools and to expand the existing ones in 1958, had not been attended to by the Ministry of Education, its new spokesman in the House accused the Government of going back on the agreement with the Missions. Mr. Okeke emphasized that the Catholics would resist any attempt to deny parents the right to choose schools for their children.

At instances such as the above, the Protestants would come out on the side of the Government. For example, when Mr. P.N. Okeke made the above allegation and threat, a Protestant member of the House, Reverend M.D. Opara warned the Government to be careful with

"some of our own people<sup>69</sup> who try to assist those foreign people to keep us under bondage for ever. We must be free not only from British rule but also from Church rule too".<sup>70</sup>

Incidents such as the above would suggest that although the RCM had demonstrated that it was capable of forcing the Government to change some of its educational policies, all the same, its attacks and pressures were

<sup>69</sup>"Those foreign people" in the above quotation presumably referred to the Irish Priests who dominated the Catholic hierarchy in the Eastern Region.

<sup>70</sup>

Eastern Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates 1955-58, op. cit. p. 124.

not allowed to go unchallenged. It would also provide a further evidence of the continued Protestant support for the Government.

It may be also interesting to note that a few years later, Mr. P.N. Okeke who had succeeded Chief B.C. Okwu as the Catholic unofficial spokesman in the House was also appointed a member of the cabinet. The appointment of the two men into the cabinet could imply that by that means, the Government was trying to silence the radical Catholic critics of its educational policies with ministerial offices.

In conclusion, by compromising some of its educational policies in order to appease the Catholics, the Government lost its first major attempt to secularize education in the Region. In the face of many pronged Catholic pressures from within and from without the rank and file of the party in power, the Government seemed to have lacked the courage of its convictions. For this reason, the unique opportunity offered by the UPE scheme for effecting some desirable changes in the ownership and the management of primary schools was lost. By the concessions, this first round of the struggle could be said to have been won by the RCM as the envisaged radical changes remained unimplemented along with the UPE scheme.

It could also be argued that although the RCM won the battle, it did not win the war as events in later years tend to suggest. On the part of the Government, its strategy may have been politically astute. The concessions may have helped it to win the elections and after that, it was able to withdraw the concessions it had made earlier as we shall see later in this chapter. It is therefore likely that part of the Government strategy was to use the concessions to win the elections and to strengthen its position and thereafter, be better able to pursue its educational policies with firmness.

#### 7.2.5 The Financial Crisis of the UPE, its Modification and Effects

Under the tense atmosphere generated by the controversies over the

new education policies and the lack of adequate time to prepare for the launching of the UPE scheme, the real financial implications of the programme would appear to have been vaguely considered by the NCNC Government. The politicians had reasons not to bother about the financial aspect of the scheme yet.

In the first place, the Nationalists believed that the expatriate civil servants had over-estimated the cost of the UPE programme. If that was so, all might yet be well. There was also the illusion mentioned earlier that the new Finance Law 1956 would bring in more revenue for education than the previous rating system. It was also believed that the actual enrolment might not be so heavy as to raise the capital expenditure up to the estimated amount. The politicians also believed that the proposed new system of the ownership of schools would eliminate duplication of facilities by rival denominations and consequently, the overall cost of education would be reduced.

In spite of the vague nature of the above assumptions, there were other reasons why the politicians preferred to cling on to them at least for the time being. Already the unity of the NCNC party had been shaken to the very roots of its foundations by the confrontations with the Roman Catholic Mission. Equally important was the fact that a general election was pending. Under these circumstances, it would be a political suicide to make any public statement on the financial uncertainty of the Regional economy to support the scheme. Such a statement might spark off another serious crisis which could alienate further mass support from the party. It was therefore better not to give any serious considerations to the financial aspect of the scheme until the party had first of all, been returned to power. After that, it would be time to consider the economic implications of the fee-free full primary education of eight years duration for the poorest region in the Federation. Then too, the party would have secured another five years within which it would endeavour to heal the

wounds of its miscalculations before going back to the electorates for another mandate.

The above analyses were borne out by what actually happened a few months after the scheme was launched. In the first place, of the estimated £5 million to be realised from the new Finance Law, the tax officials collected only £2.1 million. In addition, salary arrears for teachers following a revision of their scales in 1956, the unprecedented explosion in primary school enrolment, the concessions to the Voluntary Agencies and the building grants to the Local Government Councils for their new schools, all combined to make the actual cost of the scheme in its first year of operation much higher than had been estimated.

For instance, by the middle of 1957, the Ministry of Education had already spent about £4.9 million. That was over £2 million more than was actually allocated to it for the financial year 1956/57. At that rate, the Region was spending nearly 42 per cent of its total annual budget on education alone. Compared with 28.07 percent of the budget spent on education in 1956, there was no doubt that the Regional economy could not support the scheme, just as the expatriate officials had advised.<sup>71</sup> In the circumstances, it was clear to the politicians that unless the UPE scheme was modified, there would be almost no funds left for other social services. The hard facts must therefore be faced and it was time to tell people the truth. The politicians argued that unless the scheme was modified, the Region would be spending half of its annual revenue on education alone by 1958.<sup>72</sup> Something drastic had to be done to avoid such a situation and the people must be told the exact financial position.

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<sup>71</sup> Annual Report 1959, p. 47.

<sup>72</sup> Okwu, B.C. (Acting Minister of Education) Parliamentary Debates, Eastern House of Assembly, February 13, 1958 p. 10. See also Dike Commission Report, p. 12; and Annual Reports 1956, p. 33 and 1957, p. 32.

The first measures adopted to stave off the financial collapse of the Region through the excessive high expenditure on education were the stoppage of building grants to both Local Government Councils and the Voluntary Agencies, and the freezing of further grants to the Missionary Societies for administrative expenses for 1958 only. These were followed up with an announcement by the Ministry of Education on the 8th of January 1958, a few days before schools were due to resume, to the effect that the Assumed Local Contributions or the payment of fees abolished the previous year, were to be reintroduced with immediate effect. Each child in Infants I and II was to pay an 'enrolment fee' of ten shillings and one pound for those in Standards I to IV. Pupils in Standards V and VI were to be assessed at the rate of £6 and £8 each per annum respectively.<sup>73</sup>

From the author's personal knowledge of the above incident, the reactions of the people particularly in the villages, was that of anger and disappointment. Before then, only very few among the masses would believe that their much respected Dr. Azikiwe, popularly known as "Zik of Africa" could so suddenly break a promise. "So after all, he is an ordinary human being like all of us", the people seemed to be saying to one another. They could not understand why the Government should reintroduce the payment of fees so soon after it had abolished it.

As a secondary school student holidaying in his village at the time, the author remembers that the people, especially the elders, gathered in small groups at the village square to discuss their disappointment with the Government. At one of such gatherings, one of the oldest men in the village expressed the view that the incident had confirmed their original mistrust of the new class of educated elite and their ability to rule the people in the place of the whiteman. The old man recalled that about "twenty and ten years before"<sup>74</sup> when the village Native

<sup>73</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Region, Circular No. S.B6/2 of January 8, 1958.

<sup>74</sup>The Ibo numeral is counted in twenties and tens. What the old man meant above was "thirty years ago".



Administration Dispensary was established, the white District Officer came to the people and through his interpreter, asked them to raise a certain amount of money and he would provide the balance of what was needed to give them a "House of Medicine".<sup>75</sup> As soon as the people raised their own share of the cost, the whiteman kept his promise and immediately put up the "House of Medicine".

The above story was to illustrate the point that the people had greater confidence in the whiteman's Government. He was said to be just, straightforward and to be a man of his word. He always kept his promise. If a white Government had abolished the payment of school fees, it would never have been reintroduced. To the villagers, the white District Officers were as dependable as the Village Council of Elders. Neither of the two groups would ever deceive the people. The same could not be said of the new political leaders who would say one thing today and do a different thing the next day. The mood of the people in the author's village was same as the other parts of the Region.

What appeared to have angered the people all the more was the fact that the new rates of school fees were higher than the amounts paid before the so-called UPE was introduced. On that account, they were saying that the whole scheme was a pre-meditated designed to deceive them. Everywhere - in market places, offices, social and other gatherings, the people argued that the new rates were intended to recover the Government expenditure on education for the one year of the UPE scheme. This seemed to have added fuel to their burning anger and rage which found expression in popular mass unrest and protest demonstrations everywhere in the Region.

To quell the public anger, Chief G.E. Okeke, the Minister of Education

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<sup>75</sup>"House of Medicine" is the literal translation of Hospital in Ibo language.

was directed to undertake what was described as "meet the people tour" of the Region to explain the action of the Government to them. The announcement of the proposed tour was followed almost immediately by another that the Minister had suddenly taken ill and had been flown to London for medical treatment. In his absence, Chief B.C. Okwu was appointed to act as the Minister of Education in addition to his normal duties as the substantive Minister of Information.<sup>76</sup>

Already the people were mad with anger and would not listen to any explanation not even from their much respected Zik. Before Chief Okwu had time to embark on his new role as the defender of the scheme he was known to have sharply criticised before he was appointed a cabinet minister the previous year, Owerri town had started violent demonstrations along the streets. In a few days, the entire Region was engulfed in violent uprisings by the masses. The homes of Parliamentarians both Regional and Federal were looted and burned down. In the author's Division, the house of Mr. A.E. Ukata, who was a member of the Federal House of Representatives, was looted and burnt down by angry mobs made up mainly of women. Their other major targets were school buildings and Government offices. A good number of them were burnt down. As the angry mobs marched through the streets they shouted:

"Down with blackman rule! Down with a group of people who will not keep their promise!"

For about three weeks running the violence continued unabated. On the 5th of February, the Governor of the country in Lagos declared a state of emergency throughout the Eastern Region, and sent down a reinforcement of 500 policemen to help those already stationed there to help restore law and order. Before then, many delegations of angry women had forcefully

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<sup>76</sup>See Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. p. 181.

gone into trains without tickets and travelled to Enugu from all over the Region to see Dr. Azikiwe, the Premier. Those of them who actually reached Enugu were not allowed to see him. Instead, the acting Minister of Education, Chief B.C. Okwu was directed to meet some of them. His own mother was on one of the delegations he met.<sup>77</sup>

On the 9th of February, Dr. Azikiwe made a broadcast to the people appealing to them to keep calm and also promised them that when the Eastern House of Assembly met on the 13th, their views (the people's) would be carefully considered.

The House met as scheduled. During the debate on the modification of the UPE scheme, the Premier made a speech denying all the allegations made against his Government over the scheme. Among them were that there was "inadequate consultation with the people", and "that the people were not told the truth about the implications of the scheme".<sup>78</sup>

Concerning the allegations, the Premier declared: "We pleaded 'not guilty' on all these points".

On the first one, he said that the Honourable Minister of Education had consulted the representatives of the Voluntary Agencies, Local Government Associations and the Board of Education before taking major decisions on the scheme. On the second allegation of not telling the people the truth, he pleaded that the implications of the scheme were contained in the Governor's speech from the Throne delivered in March, 1957. The Premier concluded that in the circumstances, it was wrong to say that the people had not been made to appreciate the magnitude of what was involved by the scheme.<sup>79</sup>

The Government's defence on the second allegation seems to have evaded the main question. In relation to the Universal Primary Education scheme,

<sup>77</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 182-3; see also *Dike Commission Report*, op. cit. p. 13.

<sup>78</sup> A Selection from the Speeches of Nnamdi Azikiwe, op. cit. p. 43.

<sup>79</sup> *ibid.*, p. 44.

what the Speech in question had said was that:

"You will observe that the bill for education, now approaching £6 million, is some 42 per cent of the total expenditure for the year. This reflects not only popular demand but my Government's faith in the expansion of the educational system as a main road to progressive prosperity and as such, a road along which the Region shall move as rapidly and as far as financial resources permit".<sup>80</sup>

The Governor went on to outline the enormous rate of expansion which had resulted from the introduction of the UPE scheme both in the number of schools and their enrolment and added:

"It remains to consolidate the system and steadily to develop it so as to provide for the increasing number of children who will henceforth complete the full primary course".<sup>81</sup>

The text of the Governor's speech did not say that the payment of fees would be reintroduced after the scheme had been in operation for one year. That was the crucial issue that unleashed the wave of violence and demonstrations as an expression of the people's anger and disappointment. The decision of the Government to reintroduce the payment of fees was actually made known to them on the 8th of January, 1958. That was a few days before the schools were due to resume. It took parents by surprise as they were not budgeting to pay fees for their children in the new school year.

At the end of the debate on the financial problems of the UPE scheme, the House resolved:

"That in view of the difficulties created by the rising cost of education as a result of the introduction of Universal Primary Education, this House approves in principle the need to modify the scheme".<sup>82</sup>

The modifications announced later were as follows:

<sup>80</sup> Eastern Region of Nigeria: "The Speech from the Throne" by the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Robert De Stapledon, March 22, 1957. Eastern House of Assembly Debates, Official Report, 21st March to 10th April, 1957, Government Printer, Enugu, 1958, p. 23.

<sup>81</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>82</sup> Eastern House of Assembly Debates Official Report 13th to 18th February, 1958, p. 114.

Infants I and II: Free

Standards I and II: £2 per pupil per year for hypothetical thirty  
in each class (Assumed Local Contribution)

Standards III and IV: £4 per pupil per year for hypothetical thirty  
in each class (Assumed Local Contribution)

Standards V and VI: £6 per pupil per year for hypothetical thirty  
in each class (Assumed Local Contribution).<sup>83</sup>

Individual Local Government areas were left to decide the method of raising the Assumed Local Contribution. It was however suggested to them that this could be done either by direct fees from pupils, by contribution from the local communities or by rates to be levied and collected by the Local Government Councils.<sup>84</sup>

The reintroduction of fees or the ALC had some adverse effects on the primary school system. For instance, the Dike Commission Report (p. 11) estimated that as a result, over 260,000 pupils dropped off the school system in 1958 because their parents could not afford to pay their fees.

On their part, the Missionary Societies complained that the first year after fees were reintroduced was a very difficult one for them. Many of them were unable to raise enough funds from local sources to make up the Government grants for the salaries of their teachers and other expenses. The report of the great difficulty in collecting the ALC came from many parts of the Region. For instance, a CMS General Manager of Schools at Umuahia complained that:

"The Assumed Local Contribution for 1958 was the highest ever paid in the Region. After struggling to pay it, the average villager found there was little money left to pay for buildings and equipment."<sup>85</sup>

<sup>83</sup>Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 13.

<sup>84</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>85</sup>Annual Report, 1958, p. 13.

In the same vein, another CMS Education Secretary in the Rivers Province reported that:

"It is now more difficult to interest the local communities in building or extending primary schools than it was before the Universal Primary Education".<sup>86</sup>

It is to be recalled that at this time, the Local Authority schools did not levy any charges on their pupils for building. The Regional Government had earlier made grants to them to cover the cost of their class room blocks. But in the case of the Voluntary Agencies, such grants covered only a part of the overall cost. For this reason, they still had to levy their pupils to raise the other part. The last complaint was a reflection of this situation. Many parents at the time would rather send their children to the Local Authority Schools where no payment of building funds was involved.

In 1958, too, a CSM Manager of Schools in Ogoja Province expressed the same problem in the following words:

"It is impossible to pay too high a tribute to the patience and faithfulness of the teachers mainly in Ogoja Province who, twice in the same year, have continued to give full service to the Community without receiving any salary for months at a stretch. Certain Headmasters, some of them young and some uncertificated, have displayed genuine leadership in keeping their staffs at work and stimulating the local community to raise considerable donations".<sup>87</sup>

From Onitsha, a Roman Catholic Manager of schools commented as follows:

"The prophets of woe thought that schooling would almost fade and die in half of the East. It did suffer a set-back. But apart from areas with weak schooling tradition, little permanent harm was done to enrolment".<sup>88</sup>

In his own contribution, a Manager from Calabar had this to say:

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<sup>86</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>87</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>88</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

"1958 was a year of great strain out of which the Universal Primary Education has come to rest, I hope, on surer foundations."<sup>89</sup>

All the above comments together show that the reintroduction of the ALC in 1958 resulted in a great deal of financial difficulties for the Missionary Societies.

In response to the complaints by the Voluntary Agencies, the Government introduced some measures early in 1959 aimed at giving them some financial relief. They were:

- (a) The extension of fee-free education to Standard I;
- (b) The reduction of rate of Assumed Local Contributions by ten shillings from Standards II to IV; and
- (c) The lowering of rate of Assumed Local Contributions in secondary schools to £12, and of the hypothetical factor to twenty in case of post-secondary classes.

The first measure was estimated to cost the Government £500,000, the second £160,000 and the third £45,000.<sup>90</sup>

Furthermore, the extension of the UPE scheme to Standard I with effect from January, 1959 brought the number of fee-free classes to three out of the eight of them in all. This also meant that all the new Local Government Councils schools were non-fee paying, and would have the effect of continuing to make them more popular among parents than the Voluntary Agency schools.

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<sup>89</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>90</sup> Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 14; see also Annual Report 1959, p.5.

### 7.3 Government Withdrawal of the Earlier Concessions to the Missions

The ban on the establishment of new primary schools by the Voluntary Agencies which the Government had lifted following serious objections by the RCM in 1957, was re-imposed in 1959. This time, the Government argued that a study by the Ministry of Education had shown that there was not much increase in enrolment between 1958 and 1959. This was said to mean that the existing schools were enough to meet the demand and therefore, there was no need to establish new ones.

Soon after the reintroduction of the ban was made public, the RCM issued a statement expressing the opposition of its members to it. The Mission argued that in some areas, the disturbances which followed the modification of the UPE scheme had led to a decrease in the enrolment for 1958. But since then, many of the pupils who dropped out because their parents could not afford the fees, had started to come back to re-enrol. The RCM therefore wanted permission to open new primary schools in such areas, and to be allowed additional streams in its other existing schools.

On their part, the Protestant Missions, through one of their representatives on the Regional Board of Education, expressed satisfaction with the new policy and the UPE scheme as it then operated. He concluded by saying:

"There are no protests, no disturbances, and everywhere the Universal Primary Education scheme appeared to have operated smoothly. The only serious problem in the operation of the scheme now is the inability or reluctance of the various councils to provide additional classroom accommodation as their Council schools grow".<sup>91</sup>

It is worthy of note that while the RCM regarded the new Local Government schools as 'godless' and had banned their members from sending

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<sup>91</sup>Annual Report 1959, p. 13.



their children to them, the Protestant Missions supported their existence and would like to see them expanded.

Secondly, the reintroduction of the ban on the Voluntary Agencies from opening new primary schools by the Government two years after it was withdrawn, showed that although the RCM could be seen as having won the first round of the battle, the concessions to it were presumably mere tactical retreat and by no means, an absolute surrender by the Regional Government. Its original policies still stood as the laws were not repealed, and bits of them would be implemented whenever the atmosphere was considered right.

Also in 1959, the Government withdrew another of the concessions it made earlier in 1957. It stopped making building grants to both the Voluntary Agencies and to the Local Government Councils. It may be significant that no evidence was found to the effect that any of the Councils protested against this measure. But in a joint protest, the Protestant and the Catholic Missions opposed it arguing that "the expansion of buildings involved was beyond the scope of voluntary effort only and wanted levies of from 5s to 10s legalised". The Ministry of Education also reported that some of the Missionary Societies had already, and without permission from the Government, imposed 'illegal' levies on local communities for school buildings. The Provincial Education Officers were directed to investigate the report. In all proved cases, the Missions concerned were ordered to refund the monies already collected to the people.<sup>92</sup>

It should be noted that contrary to what happened in 1957, the Government stood its ground this time and refused to rescind the withdrawal of the 1957 concessions despite the Missionary protests and demonstrations by the Catholic women. Its firmness could be seen as a mark of

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<sup>92</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

increasing confidence in its ability to carry through its policies. It could also suggest that the concessions were originally made partly on account of the pending elections in 1957. There were other instances of such firmness in the face of Catholic opposition similar to that of 1957, during the period 1960-65 (see Chapter Eight).

Finally, in 1959, the section of the Education Law 1956 relating to "Records and Books" (see Chapter 5.5.viii), was amended to apply not only to grant-aided schools but to all educational institutions in the Region whether public or private. By this amendment, state control was extended to embrace both aided and unaided primary and secondary schools. Hitherto, the unaided schools were virtually outside strict state control until they attained the aided status. Henceforth, Government Inspectors were empowered to inspect all secondary schools in the Region and to get them to comply with Government regulations.<sup>93</sup> This meant the extension of state supervision over the entire school system. All the Government measures were announced between October and December 1959 and they were to become operative on 1st January, 1960.

#### 7.4 The Dike Commission 1958-59

It was after the UPE crises and its modification that the Regional Government set up the Dike Commission to review the system of education in Eastern Nigeria. The four-man Commission was made up the following members:

1. Professor K.O. Dike, Vice-Principal and Professor of History, University College, Ibadan; Chairman;
2. Dr. Reuben Frodin, Visiting Professor of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles;
3. Mr. Vincent C. Ikeotuonye, Chairman of the Eastern Region Scholarship Board; Principal and Proprietor, Zikton Grammar School, Ozubulu,

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<sup>93</sup> ibid., p. 6; see also Education Handbook, 1964, op. cit. pp. 30-3.

Eastern Nigeria; and

4. Mr. G.H. Sylvester, Chief Education Officer, Bristol.<sup>94</sup>

The Commission's terms of reference were as follows:

"1. To investigate the organisation, administration and management of education in the Eastern Nigeria,

2. To investigate the arrangement of the curricula of the primary, secondary, teacher-training, commercial and technical institutions in the Region.

3. To investigate the adequacy of the method of examination and certification in all the educational institutions in the Region.

4. To investigate the system of vocational training and vocational guidance in the primary and secondary schools in the Region.

5. To investigate the practice of distribution of grants-in-aid in vogue in the Region.

6. To investigate the operation of the Universal Primary Education scheme and its effects on the budget and finances of the Region.

7. To consider whether any changes are desirable in respect of paragraphs (1)-(6) of these Terms of Reference.

8. To make its findings and recommendations".<sup>95</sup>

From its terms of reference, the task of the Commission covered the whole spectrum of the formal school system. It is to be recalled that Dr. Azikiwe had earlier in 1954 expressed the view that the nationalists were not happy with the way education was administered in the Region, and that they had decided to work out a new educational programme for the future (see Chapter 5.3). Part of the new programme was contained in the Education Law 1956 and the first attempt to implement it was through the UPE scheme of 1957. But this could not be implemented in full on account of missionary opposition, particularly from the RCM, and financial difficulties. The Dike Commission therefore, was a fresh attempt at an independent diagnosis of the problems of the education system and their possible solution. The terms of reference would also suggest that the

<sup>94</sup>The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 3.

<sup>95</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

settlements reached after the UPE crises were not regarded by the Government as final.

The Commission received memoranda from 101 different bodies and individuals some of whom were the Missionary societies, the Local Government Councils and Teachers Unions. It interviewed a total of 72 people associated with education at the various levels covered by its terms of reference. It also visited 44 educational institutions in the Region. They included primary, secondary, teacher-training, commercial and technical institutions.<sup>96</sup>

From all the memoranda, interviews, visits and official documents, the Commission summarised the position of all the major agencies on the future of education in the Region. It started with the position of the Government as outlined in one of its policy documents. A part of the extract quoted was as follows:

"Government felt that it was their duty, not only to provide a scheme of universal primary education, but also to devise an economic and efficient scheme, which would avoid duplication of educational facilities arising from denominational differences. In the past . . . it was not unusual to find in one village two or three half-filled schools catering for children of different sects. But when education is provided on a Region-wide basis, Government cannot allow such a wasteful arrangement."

The Commission also stated that it was the policy of the Government that there should be "freedom of religious instruction" in all Local Authority schools and in those of all the Voluntary Agencies, and that "this is fully guaranteed by law". In order to encourage local initiative in education, the Government further decided "to channel future school development through Local Government Councils". Expressing its views on the position of the Government, the Commission declared: "We are in full agreement with the Government on these aims".<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> See ibid., pp. 89-93.

<sup>97</sup> ibid., p. 42.

### The Protestant Position

From the memoranda submitted to it, and the evidence it received from the Protestant Missions, the Commission was "of the opinion that in principle the Protestant missions subscribe to the Government's standpoint on Universal Primary Education". They however, criticized the timing of the scheme and the lack of adequate preparation before it was launched.

Furthermore, "some of the Protestants think that the time has arrived for the state to take over at least the primary sector of education". To this end, it was the general policy of the Methodist Mission

"to disengage ultimately completely from primary education and to retain one or two good secondary schools while putting their main effort into training colleges".

The policy of the Church of Scotland Mission was much the same as that of the Methodists. In the case of the Anglican Mission, it also agreed with the policy of the other two Protestant Missions, and "would no doubt be willing to work within a planned state system".<sup>98</sup>

In support of its views on the position of the CMS, the Commission quoted extracts from a memorandum submitted to it by one of the Anglican Education Secretaries. Part of it read as follows:

"There are ... certain villages and hamlets ... whose population warrants the existence of one school even though they may have two or more churches. I know that some of those villages actually have more than one denominational school, all half-full. It is my opinion that in such cases economy dictates that the various schools should be amalgamated under the management or proprietorship of a neutral body like the Local Council or a Committee of it, and the staff should be drawn from all the denominations represented in the village, since it is only by so doing that secret proselytisation in the school can be stopped. In spite of the conscience clause in the Education Law, individuals and churches exist in this country who, in so many subtle ways, try to 'convert in their schools those

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<sup>98</sup> ibid., p. 43.

children who are not members of their particular church'."

On local participation in education, the Memorandum said:

"We recognise the need for local people to have more say in the affairs of their school. That is why, for all Anglican schools, we elected school committees who work with their Headmaster and Manager".

According to the Education Secretary, the other Missions should be encouraged to adopt the Anglican system of primary school management

"because even though a school may be termed 'Roman Catholic Mission' or 'Church of Scotland Mission' or 'Methodist', the capital cost was first raised by the local community".<sup>99</sup>

From the views expressed by the Protestant Missions in general, the Commission was of the opinion that the Protestants were in agreement with "some of the reasons which led to the Regional Government to initiate Universal Primary Education". It was also clearly implied that they

"will be prepared to co-operate with Government in evolving a national organisation that will eliminate wastage in education and encourage active local participation in the running of schools".

In conclusion, the Commission was of the opinion that the Protestant Missions in general:

"would welcome a co-ordinated plan of education provided that its implications are fully worked out in the closest co-operation and consultation with them; that very careful and detailed preparations are made before such a scheme is launched, and that the scheme is well-timed".

The Protestants also complained that educational development in the Region was "too much at the mercy of politics and that this simple factor forced the pace of advance faster than the Region could bear".

Finally, the Commission noted with satisfaction the "bold steps" which the Protestant Missions had taken to 'Nigerianize education' adding that most of their secondary schools and teacher training colleges were headed by Nigerians and that "the educational secretaries and managers are almost entirely Nigerian".<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>100</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 43-4.

### The Catholic Position

Based on the memoranda and the oral evidence from the RCM, the Commission was of the view "that the Catholic Mission ... is opposed to state education". The Catholic views were said to be so strong "that any attempt to introduce radical changes in the existing position may precipitate religious and political strife". In support of the above view, the Commission quoted part of the article in its weekly newspaper, The Leader of 26th January, 1957, entitled "Ministry (of Education) Versus Pope" referred to earlier.

In one of the memoranda by the RCM, the Universal Primary Education scheme was emphatically rejected from the religious point of view. The memorandum stated among other things:

"... it may be argued that Council schools can also be religious. I assert emphatically that they cannot be as at present controlled. How can religious teaching have priority in a school where the controlling body is not 'ex professo' concerned with religious teaching or qualified to see it maintained? To make religious training depend on a casual class, perhaps conducted by an unqualified person, is to put religion in a compartment, to put God in a pigeon hole ... The retort may be made that Council or State schools work successfully in Britain, United States and other democratic countries. These schools operate in an environment where Christian values are normally accepted as a basis of living. These values are only in the process of formulation in Nigeria. And in any case it is debatable as to whether state schools do give the youth of today sufficient spiritual formation to meet the trials of life in the modern world."<sup>101</sup>

From this, the Commission reached the conclusion "that nothing short of clerical control of education will satisfy this denomination". It also added that it had received statements to the effect that on many occasions, Catholic priests had denounced the Local Government "schools as godless from the pulpit and threatened with excommunication parents who sent their children to such schools". This religious position of the Catholics according to the Commission "makes it difficult to work out a

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<sup>101</sup> ibid., p. 44.

unified plan of state education to which all the denominations can adhere". It was also of the opinion that "the official Catholic policy permits no Catholic to go to any but Catholic schools".<sup>102</sup>

The Commission therefore warned that:

"when the Nigerian Union of Teachers and some of the Protestant Voluntary Agencies advocate planning in the sphere of primary education 'with a view to preventing overlapping with its consequent wastage of revenue', they must know that the Catholics will not co-operate in a plan which, however efficient and economical, might involve sending Catholic children to non-Catholic schools."<sup>103</sup>

The Commission also pointed out that its attention had also been drawn to "clerical control" of Catholic schools. In this respect, even the Catholic supporters alleged that it "leaves little room for the promotion or advancement of laymen in their organisation". The type of "the Nigerianisation of education which has taken place in the Protestant agencies, has not been matched by a similar movement in the Catholic Mission". On the other hand, it was recognised even by the critics of the system of administering the Catholic schools "that these clerics, most of them, are devoted and hard working".<sup>104</sup>

Based on the position of the RCM on the introduction of state system of education, and the fact that the Mission controlled "a little less than 50 per cent of the schools in the Region", the Commission advised that "it is necessary to move cautiously towards a co-ordinated system of education, such as must ultimately be achieved if the status of teachers and their conditions of service are to be respected and improved. Although the teachers, in their desperation, blame the Government for their poor conditions of service", they should be made to realise that "given the present position of educational proprietorship and management and

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<sup>102</sup> ibid., p. 45.

<sup>103</sup> ibid., p. 45.

<sup>104</sup> ibid., loc. cit.



short of revolution", the Government "is powerless to act without the fullest co-operation of the dominant Voluntary Agencies".<sup>105</sup>

Recommendations of the Commission:

For the purposes of this study, only the terms of reference (1), (5) and (6) are directly relevant. We shall therefore be concerned with the Commission's recommendations on those three. On the first one - the organisation, administration and management of education in the Region, it recommended inter alia:

"That consideration should be given to the organisation of education on provincial basis under the executive direction of the Provincial Education Officers, and to the establishment of Provincial Committees, as a stage towards further devolution".<sup>106</sup>

It was further recommended

"That, with the establishment of the proposed Provincial Authorities, the management of Local Agency Schools should, where necessary, be transferred to them".<sup>107</sup>

Under this recommendation, the management of all primary schools in a province was to be taken over by a Provincial Board under the executive direction of the Provincial Education Officer. This meant in effect that the individual Voluntary Agencies would cease to be responsible for the management of their schools. All the agencies in the province would however be represented on the Board.

The Commission also recommended that the Government should restrict any further expansion of primary education, and that when it became necessary to lift the restriction, the Minister of Education should give approval purely on the basis of established needs and on provincial basis.<sup>108</sup>

On secondary education, the Commission recommended that "between

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<sup>105</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>106</sup> ibid., p. 83.

<sup>107</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>108</sup> ibid., p. 85.

20 and 30 additional secondary schools should be opened in the immediate future. That the possibility of common entrance examination to secondary schools be considered."<sup>109</sup>

On the system of educational finance, it was the view of the Commission

"That there be no radical change in the basic method of calculating grants or in the present system of financing schools . . ." <sup>110</sup>

There were many other recommendations on various aspects of education - primary, secondary, teacher-training, curriculum, technical and vocational.<sup>111</sup> But the ones outlined above were those related to the areas of the controversy between the Missionary Societies and the Regional Government.

It may be noted that the Commission's recommendations on those controversial areas such as: the reintroduction of the ALC, the setting up of Provincial School Boards to manage primary education, common entrance examinations into secondary schools etc. agreed more or less with the policies of the Government and the provisions of the Education Law 1956.

Furthermore, although the Commission submitted its Report in August, 1959, it was not until three years later, 1962, that the document was made public. Realizing that the announcement of the withdrawal of the 1957 concessions to the Missionary Societies was made, at least, two months after the submission of the Report, it is possible that Government decision to reintroduce the policy measures may have been partly influenced by the commission's recommendations.

On the other hand, there are a number of possible reasons why the Government may have decided to implement some parts of the recommendations through the withdrawal of the 1957 concessions while withholding the publication of the Report.

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<sup>109</sup> ibid., p. 84.

<sup>110</sup> ibid., p. 83.

<sup>111</sup> see ibid., pp. 82-7.

One, the recommendations covered a wider range of controversial areas than the measures announced in 1959. If the Government had accepted and published them, such an action might have evoked an atmosphere of controversy similar to that of 1957. With the attainment of national independence already fixed for 1st October, 1960, and the memory of the state of emergency which the Federal Authorities had declared in the Eastern Region following the UPE disturbances in 1958, the Government would have thought it unwise to do anything likely to evoke serious civil unrest at that point in time.

Secondly, it should be recalled that it was about the same time as the Report was submitted that Dr. Azikiwe resigned his Premiership of Eastern Nigeria to become the President of the Senate in Lagos. He was succeeded in the East by Dr. M.I. Okpara, another Protestant. Zik may have decided to leave the battle for his successor to continue from where he stopped.

Thirdly and as later events would suggest, Dr. Okpara went back to the electorates for a fresh mandate before the expiration of the normal life for the Regional House of Assembly. This was done in 1961 soon after the attainment of national independence. In the circumstances, it might have been considered more expedient to leave the Commission Report until after the proposed general elections. This last point seems more likely because, as soon as the Report was published in 1962, a series of other measures aimed at the eventual establishment of the Provincial Boards of Education to take over the management and the control of primary schools in the Region, were initiated. They were such that the party might not have contemplated at the eve of an election, for as in the past, the new measures resulted in bitter controversies between the RCM and the Regional Government.

### Summary

First and foremost, the UPE scheme in Eastern Nigeria served to reveal the real extent of Roman Catholic influence in the Region. Until then, no one seemed to know that the Church was powerful enough to challenge and force the Government to drop or amend any sections of its policies and laws objectionable to the Church.

The main lesson of the UPE experience was that it would be very difficult to push through any major educational reform by democratic process without the approval and the co-operation of the Roman Catholics in the Region. This seemed to have been the case at least, as of 1957-8. This lesson would appear to be one of the major considerations in the decision of the Military Authorities to nationalize the schools by Edicts and without much consultation with the Voluntary Agencies, and at a time when a state of emergency was in force in all parts of Eastern Nigeria following the end of the national crisis and the civil war, (see Chapter 10).

Secondly, the scheme provided the first real testing grounds for the Nationalist educational proposals and policies. In addition, the attempts to implement the provisions of the Education Law 1956 marked the beginning of the open confrontations between the Catholic Mission in particular and the successive Governments of Eastern Nigeria leading up to the nationalisation of the school system by Military Edicts.

Thirdly, the scheme was ruined by the political considerations on the part of the party in power; lack of adequate planning; religious conflicts and rivalries among the Missionary Societies; the failure of the Government leaders for political reasons, to consult adequately with such agencies as the Missions and the teachers' unions; and to heed the advice of the top expatriate civil servants in the Ministries of Education and Finance. Another important factor was the overall poorer economy of the Region as compared with the other two. For example, and as David Abernethy has shown, a similar scheme in the Western Region was comparatively more

successful because the unfavourable circumstances which ruined its counterpart in the East did not exist there in the West.<sup>112</sup>

Finally, the Dike Commission soon after the UPE crisis was indicative of the Government's new line of approach in handling the issue of the Missionary Societies in the education system of the Region. From then onwards, there was constant recourse to the views of 'experts' through commissions, seminars and conferences to advise the Government on educational matters (see Chapter 8).

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<sup>112</sup>See Abernethy, D.B., op. cit. pp. 144-160.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE MISSIONARY SOCIETIES AND THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT 1960-65

#### 8.1 The Period 1960-62

On the whole, the period 1960-65 was a very turbulent one in the relationship between the Missionary Societies, the RCM in particular, and the Regional Government. The incidents and developments of the period were so many and most of them long-drawn and complicated that it will be difficult to record all of them in this study. The more outstanding ones among them were as outlined below.

##### 8.1.1 The Ban on the Opening of New Primary Schools

The dispute over the ban on the opening of new primary schools by the Voluntary Agencies, re-introduced in 1959, did not end that year. Although the Government had made it clear that it would not lift the ban, the RCM continued to press for its being lifted.

In April, 1960, the Mission took up the matter through one of its representatives on the Regional Board of Education, the Rt. Rev. Bishop Ekandem (now a Cardinal). He informed the Board that his Mission was entirely opposed to the Regional Government policy of restricting the opening of new primary schools. The RCM was therefore, asking that the restriction should be lifted. The Bishop was supported by another Catholic member of the Board, Rev. Father O'Connor.

On their part, the Protestant Missions were of the opinion that if the Government would not lift the ban, the Voluntary Agencies themselves could find a way out of the problem created by the restriction. One of the representatives of the Protestant Mission on the Board, therefore, pointed out that his agency had solved the problem by increasing the

number of streams in their schools within areas of high enrolment and reducing them in areas of low enrolment. The Protestant Mission did not see why any agency could not do the same.

Replying on behalf of the Government, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Education told the Board that the restriction was in accordance with the maximum facilities which the financial resources of the Region could support. It was therefore unreasonable for the ban to be lifted under the prevailing financial circumstances.

At the end of the debate, the Board resolved that the Voluntary Agencies should accept the ruling by the Government and at the same time report all genuine cases of hardship arising from the ban for consideration by the Minister on their individual merits.<sup>1</sup>

This same matter was again taken up at the Board meeting held in August, 1960. The Minister of Education informed its members that he had accepted the solution suggested by the Protestant Missions on the condition that such transfers within the allowed number of streams, were made all within the same supervisory areas. Furthermore, they were not to be made from a grant-aided school to a non-aided one or vice versa.

The Catholic representatives on the Board, Rev. Frs. J. Jordan and D. O'Connor and Bishop Ekandem wanted the new ministerial ruling to be made retrospective from the beginning of the year, 1st January 1960. But to the Protestants, the ruling was completely acceptable. The new Catholic demand was referred to the Executive Council<sup>2</sup> which later ruled that the concession "should not be retrospective and that it was to commence with effect from 1st January, 1961".<sup>3</sup>

Concerning the ban, we are to note that the Protestant Missions did not raise any objection. Instead, they suggested a solution which the

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<sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. G: 133/59/89. pp. 9-12.

<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. G: 133/59-60/164. pp. 1-2.

<sup>3</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File NO. N: 133/61-62/29, p.4.

Government accepted. On its part, the RCM insisted on the ban being lifted and when it did not get this, it wanted the transfer of enrolment to be made retrospective. It is also to be noted that the Government this time, did not bow to any of the Catholic demands.

### 8.1.2 Government Attacks on Voluntary Agency School Proprietors

On the 14th March 1961, the Government Chief Whip in the Eastern House of Assembly made a speech in the House attacking the Voluntary Agency school proprietors. He described them as "Educational Contractors", and accused them of being responsible for many of the educational problems in the Region. The Chief Whip concluded the speech by calling on the Government to nationalise all Voluntary Agency schools in the Region. It was this speech that the Secretary of the EEAC referred to in his Annual Report 1964 (see Chapter 6.3.2).

The Voluntary Agency representatives on the Regional Board of Education took up the attacks with the Minister of Education during its meeting of April 1961. At the end of the Minister's address to the Board, he was called upon to condemn the speech and to dissociate the Government from the views expressed by the Chief Whip.

In his reply, the Minister disclosed that the speech was discussed at an NCNC Regional Executive Committee meeting before it was made in the House of Assembly. During the discussion, he, the Minister had personally disagreed with its text. (Perhaps this was to be expected as it was generally known that the Minister himself was already a proprietor of two secondary schools in his village).

On the other hand, the majority of the Executive Council voted in favour of the speech being made in the House. In the circumstances, it was not proper for him as a Cabinet Minister to disown the speech on behalf of the Government after it had been approved by the ruling party of which he was a member.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>ibid., pp. 1-3.



From the Minister's reply, it was clear to the Board that the Chief Whip had spoken on behalf of the party in power. Indeed and as the saying goes, "the leopard cannot change its spots". Although the Nationlist Government had lost the first round of its bid to curtail the Voluntary Agency share of primary education, that did not seem to have changed its original ideas and policies on education. In addition to reintroducing some of the measures which had caused the crisis over the UPE scheme, the Government would also want to make it clear through its Chief Whip that it had not abandoned the original intention of greater state participation and control of education.

As the attack did not discriminate between the Catholics and the Protestants, both sides on the Board of Education came together in their opposition to the speech. They decided that since the Minister was not in a position to disown the attacks on behalf of his Government, the Board would pass a resolution expressing its rejection of the views expressed by the Chief Whip on the floor of a House where Voluntary Agencies were not officially represented and so, could not defend themselves there. The resolution was passed and forwarded to the Regional Government. It read as follows:

"In view of the fact that the Government Chief Whip, Eastern Nigeria, the Hon. G.C. Okeya, went all out to attack the private school proprietors on the floor of the Eastern House of Assembly during the last Budget session of the House, whereas these attacked proprietors have no official representatives in that House to reply; and in view of the fact that the said Government Chief Whip defined private schools as non-state schools which in effect include all schools not run by the Government; in view of the fact that all these agencies be they foreign or indigenous have rendered and continue to render invaluable service to the educational development of Eastern Nigeria, the Board of Education, Eastern Nigeria, at its Seventh Meeting held on the 26th and 27th of April, 1961, condemns this unwarranted and damaging attack of the Chief Whip on Voluntary Agencies".<sup>5</sup>

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education acknowledged the

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<sup>5</sup> ibid., p. 10.

receipt of the Resolution and there is no evidence that anything more was done about it by the Regional Government. Instead of disowning the speech as the Voluntary Agencies had demanded, the Ministry of Education came out three months later, with a circular which placed all the blames on the late payment of teachers' salaries on the Missionary Societies. Copies of the Circular No. F. 9586/567 and dated 20th July, 1961 were sent to the Teachers Unions, the Local Government Councils, Provincial Assembly members and to all the Voluntary Agencies.

This second attack on the Missionary Societies in four months, again brought them together in a united opposition to the Government. At the Board of Education meeting held in August 1961, it once again resolved and complained that the Government Circular was, to say the least, "one sided" in placing the responsibility for late payment of teachers' salaries solely on the Voluntary Agency Managers of Schools.

The Board would want the Minister to amend the Circular to show that part of the cause in delaying teachers' salaries arose from late payment of grants to the Managers by his Ministry, and from failure to collect the ALC in time from the communities served by the schools. The resolution concluded that in the circumstances, it was wrong to assign all the blame to the Voluntary Agency School Managers alone.

The Government would not amend the controversial Circular as was demanded by the Missionary Societies. Instead, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, issued a press statement saying that information had reached his Ministry "that many primary school Managers have blamed their failure to meet their obligation to the teachers on the Ministry". The allegation was that the Ministry did not pay grants in time to the Managers.

The Permanent Secretary further stated that an investigation personally carried out by himself had revealed that "in the past one year", all grants for teachers' salaries had been paid by his Ministry to the

different Sub-Treasuries by the 15th of each month - "that is two full weeks before the end of the month". The statement concluded that under the above circumstances, it was unfair for the Voluntary Agencies to blame the Ministry for their own failure to pay their teachers when their salaries were due.<sup>6</sup>

As the Voluntary Agencies pointed out, it would not be fair to assign the blame for the delay in the payment of teachers' salaries to any of the bodies in particular. Even if the grants were paid in time as the Permanent Secretary claimed, the salaries could still be delayed if the local communities failed to pay up the ALC in good time. On the other hand, there were instances (see Chapter Nine), when both the grants and the ALC were promptly paid and still, the teachers did not receive their salaries when they were due. Thus, the delay could be caused by any one of the three main bodies - the Government, the Voluntary Agencies and the local communities, or even by the local sub-treasuries. The system of financing the school system would have been more to blame than any one of the three bodies.

The argument over the delay in the payment of teachers salaries marked the adoption of a new strategic weapon by the Government in the struggle with the Missionary Societies. From then onwards, there was to be greater emphasis on better service conditions for teachers as one of the underlying aims of greater state control of the school system. This strategy would appear to have paid off for it won the support of the teachers for the Government in the struggle as later events tend to suggest.

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<sup>6</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Minutes of the Board of Education Meetings, April, 1960 to October 1961.

### 8.1.3 The Ban on the Missionary Societies from Managing the Local Government Primary Schools

The dust kicked up by the last two conflicts had hardly settled down when in November, 1961, the Regional Government issued a circular directing all the Local Government Councils to assume full responsibility for the management of all their primary schools. It will be recalled that many of the Councils had handed over the management of their primary schools to one or the other of the Missionary Societies. By the new Government directive, all such agreements were to be terminated with effect from the end of 1961. It may also be recalled that in part, the arrangement was originally approved to satisfy the Missionary demand on religious instruction in the schools, and partly as a temporary measure until the Councils were in a position to manage the schools themselves.

Soon after the new directive was made public, the RCM described it as "high handed and a denial of freedom of action to the Local Government Councils". In its own statement, the Protestant Missions said that they had no regrets in relinquishing the management of the Local Authority schools which they described as "more of a liability than an asset".<sup>7</sup>

It may also be mentioned that the conciliatory appointment of a Catholic as the Minister of Education in 1957, was also withdrawn after the 1961 general elections. He was replaced by a Protestant, Dr. S.E. Imoke.

Thus, between 1959 and 1961, the Government gradually withdrew all the concessions it had made to the RCM in particular over the UPE crisis. In each case, the Mission did protest, but unlike in the past, such protests failed to elicit change of the policy. This would suggest that the Government had become more mature, confident and better able to contain opposition to its policies than in 1957. There are a number of possible explanations for this.

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<sup>7</sup>Annual Report 1961, p. 15.

One, by this time, the teachers' unions were actively supporting all measures that might help to improve the service conditions of their members.

Two, the general public was beginning to realize that greater Government control of the school system was necessary for eliminating the duplication of educational facilities arising partly from inter-denominational rivalries.

Three, the educated elite, particularly the intellectuals, were urging greater Government control of education. Some of them called on the State to take over the Voluntary Agency primary schools.<sup>8</sup>

Four, there was also the allegation by the politicians that the Catholic attitude towards the Government was inspired by the foreigners who dominated its leadership in the Region. They were said to be still living in the colonial past and had failed to recognize the realities of political independence. This allegation would appear to have influenced the thinking of many people and their reaction to the position of the RCM in educational matters.

Five, by this time, the country had achieved political independence and so, the Regional Government would have no fear of a possible Colonial Authority intervention in the event of a crisis as was the case in 1957.

Six, unlike in 1957 and earlier, the civil service at this time, had become localized. The top civil service posts were then occupied mainly by Nigerians as most of the expatriate civil servants left the service after the attainment of national independence. As was to be expected, the Nigerians civil servants were more loyal and also grateful to the politicians whose activities had made it possible for them to take over the top posts from the colonial civil servants. Such an atmosphere of harmony between the politicians and the civil service would be an additional source of

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<sup>8</sup>Interview with Professor B.O. Ukeje, former Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka; now Provost, Alvan Ikoku College of Education, Owerri, 17th September, 1975.

confidence in the ability of the Government to carry through its policies inspite of the so called foreign inspired opposition by the Catholic Mission in particular.

Seven, there was also the fact that by 1961, the local authority schools had become very popular among the people. Many parents then preferred to send their children to these schools than to the voluntary agency ones. This was principally for economic reasons. The former was cheaper as no building and Church levies were charged. The popularity of the local authority schools had won more support from among the people for the Government policy of greater state participation in the management and control of education. In the knowledge that its educational policies enjoyed popular support among the people, the Government was more strengthened in implementing them.

Finally, and perhaps the most important of all, there was the marked improvement in the finances of the Regional Government. This could be another source of greater confidence in implementing its policies. For example, the growth in its annual revenue for the period, 1959/60 - 1963/4 was as shown below:<sup>9</sup>

| Year    |     |     | Revenue (£) |
|---------|-----|-----|-------------|
| 1959/60 | ... | ... | 14,875,681  |
| 1960/61 | ... | ... | 18,844,398  |
| 1961/62 | ... | ... | 19,101,329  |
| 1962/63 | ... | ... | 19,971,250  |
| 1963/64 | ... | ... | 21,587,220  |

Compared with the normal revenue for the period 1952/53 - 1958/59 shown in Table XXI (Chapter 5.3), it is clear that the Regional Government was a lot more financially better off during the period under review than the one before it.

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<sup>9</sup>Eastern Nigeria; Approved Estimates 1963-64, Official Document No. 17 of 1963. Government Printer, Enugu, pp. 16, 207 and 211.

Armed with all the above developments in its favour, the Regional Government pursued its educational policies in a more determined way than had been the case during the UPE crisis.

#### 8.1.4 The Ikoku Conference Report 1962

It will be recalled that the Dike Commission Report was not made public until 1962. Soon after its publication, another one, The Conference on the Review of the Education System in Eastern Nigeria (referred to as the Ikoku Conference Report after the name of its Chairman Dr. Alvan Ikoku), was set up by the Regional Government. Its terms of reference were:

"to review the pattern and content of Primary, Secondary and Teacher Education in Eastern Nigeria and make recommendations under the three heads as follows:

- (a) Primary Education:  
objectives, curriculum, facilities, teachers, finance, administration, school leavers and any other relevant matter.
- (b) Secondary Education:  
objectives, selection, duration and stages, curriculum, evaluation and examination, teachers, facilities and equipment, finance, programme for development and any other relevant matter.
- (c) Teacher Education:  
categories of teachers and colleges, admission requirements, duration of training courses, nature of professional preparations, the staff of Training Institutions, In-service training, the status and conditions of service of teachers and any other relevant matter."<sup>10</sup>

It was the intention of the Government that participants at the Conference should be made up of Nigerians only. All the Missionary Societies and other educational agencies were accordingly invited to send delegates to represent them. The argument of the Government was the educational problems in the Region were first and foremost, 'Nigerian' in both their context and peculiarities. For this reason, only Nigerians were best qualified to find the answers to them. The argument went on:

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<sup>10</sup>The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. Letter of Transmission dated 3rd August, 1962.

"In the quest for the right solutions, we have commissioned many experts to study and advise the Government. Generally, such commissions had been manned mainly by non-Nigerians. The findings and recommendations of those Commissions have been extremely helpful to us in our educational plans and development. But no foreigner, no matter how sincere, knowledgeable and objective, can see or feel our problems in exactly the same way as we ourselves; for they are bound to be influenced by conditions, circumstances and traditions which, while relevant in their own countries, may not be quite applicable to our set of circumstances and conditions."<sup>11</sup>

Of the 43 members of the Conference drawn from all the Missionary Societies, the Local Government Councils, the Ministry of Education, the Nigeria Union of Teachers, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, the University of Ibadan, the Federal Emergency Science School Lagos, and other non-missionary agencies in education, there were only 4 non-Nigerians - 3 representatives of the RCM, and the fourth from the Women Training College, Umuahia jointly owned by the other three major Christian Denominations. In the Conference Steering Committee of eleven members, only the Catholic representative, Rev. Father J. Jordan was a non-Nigerian.<sup>12</sup>

At the end of its eight-day deliberations, the Conference listed what it described as "The Weak Spots in our System". The first was the dissatisfaction of the Government and the people with the ever increasing cost of education. The main cause of this was said to be the existence of "uneconomic school units" brought about by:

- (i) "Inter-village rivalries, particularly in the matter of full primary schools, i.e. schools with Standard VI class".
- (ii) "The fanning of this rivalry by interdenominational scramble for schools with religious expansion as the background motive".
- (iii) The opposition of the Missionary Societies to the secularisation of education under the UPE scheme and its consequent creation of "two or three uneconomic school units where one or two existed before".
- (iv) "Finally, the inexperience of most County Councils in school management and administration..."<sup>13</sup>

Elaborating on the existence of uneconomic school units, the Conference talked of "schools some of whose enrolments are as low as six in a class",

<sup>11</sup> Imoke, S.E., 'Forward' to the Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p. vii.

<sup>12</sup> ibid., Appendix F, pp. 48-52.

<sup>13</sup> ibid., p. 1.



and of a case recently brought to the Board of Education "of a class of thirteen taught by two teachers".<sup>14</sup>

As a way out, the Conference noted with satisfaction

"That some communities have called upon Voluntary Agencies in their midst to do the most obvious thing in the circumstance - to merge school units".

On the other hand, some of the Voluntary Agencies had been reluctant to accept the call and the Commission could not

"understand why the Christian agencies should not accept the situation 'as a call to service'".<sup>15</sup>

On educational planning, the Conference regretted what it called "a culpable lack of co-ordinated planning" under the partnership arrangement between the Missionary Societies and the Government. It urged the State to assume the responsibility for effective planning of the school system. Any one who would not accept this, could

"contract out of the national system to finance a system of their own so long as that system does not offend against the basic requirement of natural law, decency and the constitution."<sup>16</sup>

As a solution to lack of co-ordinated planning, the Conference stated:

"We recommend that the existing primary school system be reorganised in the interests of efficiency and economy. Siting should be based not on Church agency, but on the communities served, adequate safeguards being provided, as indeed at present, for religious freedom for all school children. Where this calls for the amalgamation of two or more uneconomic school units this should be done without fear or favour. It is expected that Voluntary Agencies affected will co-operate. The community served should be represented by their own nominees on the management committee of their amalgamated school".<sup>17</sup>

The recommendation on "the amalgamation of two or more uneconomic school units" was the origin of the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education late in 1962. It will be recalled that as a result of it, 580 schools were declared 'uneconomic' and either closed down, merged or

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<sup>14</sup> ibid., p. 2.

<sup>15</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>16</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>17</sup> ibid., p. 3.

reduced to junior primary. Another 64 schools were similarly affected two years later (see Chapter 6.3.1). This is evidence of educational planning in the Region being influenced more by the recommendations of special commissions than by a formal planning unit located in the Ministry of Education or elsewhere.

Some other related recommendations of the Conference were as outlined below:

A. Primary Education:

- (i) "We endorse a Six-Year Primary course for age groups six to twelve". This was implemented by the Government with effect from January, 1964.
- (ii) "The first four years of the Primary course to be fee-free and complete abolition of fees or Assumed Local Contribution for all classes by 1968".
- (iii) "Rearrangement of Primary Schools on a Provincial basis under the direction of Provincial Education Committees on which Voluntary Agencies are represented".
- (iv) "A more efficient and economical system of school supervision, possibly combining Government and Educational Agency organisations".
- (v) "A re-examination of the various Grant-in-Aid Regulations".
- (vi) The possibility of introducing a system of common entrance examinations for selection into Secondary schools should be considered".<sup>18</sup>

B. Secondary Education:

- (i) "Principalships of secondary schools should be made a promotion post and should be open to:
  - (a) graduates with teaching qualification and four years post-graduate teaching experience;
  - (b) graduates without teaching qualification and five years post-graduate teaching experience;
  - (c) non-graduates of ability and ten years continuous Secondary School experience."
- (ii) "Government teachers in the service should be treated as professional men and women and not as civil servants".
- (iii) "There should be broadly similar conditions of service for all teachers in the profession".
- (iv) "Building grants should be given to established secondary schools for lateral expansion."
- (v) "Reduction of Assumed Local Contribution for girls in all secondary schools".
- (vi) The introduction of six-year secondary education course and the elimination of the sixth-form as soon as practicable.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> ibid., p. 32.

<sup>19</sup> ibid., pp. 33-4.

The final draft of the Conference Report was meant to be signed by all the eleven members of its Steering Committee. All but the Catholic representative, Rev. Father J. Jordan, the only non-Nigerian on the Committee, endorsed and signed the Report. In a letter No. PR/56/645 dated 4th August, 1962, Father Jordan said that he could not commit his agency, the RCM to the findings and the recommendations of the Conference because,

"Never in the field of human education has so much been rushed by so few for so many".<sup>20</sup>

It may also be mentioned that at least eight of the eleven members were Protestants although their Missions were officially represented on the Committee by only three. The others represented the various interest groups attending the Conference.

The Government immediately picked on the refusal of Father Jordan to sign the Report, and described it as another "evidence of the determination of the foreign dominated Catholic hierarchy to sabotage the genuine educational efforts of all the well-meaning people of the Region in the name of religion". It also called on the people to judge for themselves.<sup>21</sup>

Whatever might have been the merits of Father Jordan's refusal to endorse the Recommendations, along with the other members, one thing is almost certain. His action seemed to have alienated much public sympathy or support for the RCM in its conflicts with the Government over education. Although the Mission continued to protest against the various policies and proposals aimed at greater state control of the school system, and to organise its women members on protest demonstrations in several cases, it was never able again to bend the will of the Government in the same way as it had done in 1957. Many people too did not regard the protest demonstrations as anything serious. Each time there was one, the general remark was "the Irish Priests are up again with their game", and that was the end.

<sup>20</sup> ibid., Appendix G, p. 53.

<sup>21</sup> Nigerian Outlook, August 18, 1962, p.5.

#### 8.1.5 The Comparative Education Seminar Abroad 1962

By 1962, too, enlightened public opinion in many parts of Nigeria was increasingly mounting the pressure on the various Governments of the Federation to take over the control of education. It was argued that this was one effective means of ending inter-denominational rivalries, waste and duplication of facilities and of ensuring better conditions of service for teachers. It was as a result of the nation-wide pressure that in 1962, the three Regional Governments in conjunction with the Federal Government, the Universities of Ibadan and Nsukka and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), organised and sponsored what was called The Comparative Education Seminar Abroad.

The membership of the eighteen-man Seminar was drawn from the seven bodies mentioned above. The Voluntary Agencies were not represented. It lasted for ten weeks during which it visited France, Sweden and the United States. The job of the Seminar was to study the system of education in those three countries and to make recommendations to the Government of Nigeria on how best its system of educational management and control could be reorganised.

The choice of the countries to be visited is of special interest. From our survey of the different types of arrangement for educational management and control in Chapter One, it is to be recalled that in those three countries, the state is supreme in educational matters. As a result, any recommendations by the Seminar based on the practices in those countries were bound to be in favour of greater state control. If the judgement of the Seminar were intended to be balanced, England and Wales, Scotland, the Irish Republic and the Netherlands, to mention a few of the typical examples discussed in Chapter One, would have been included among the countries to be visited by the Group. Secondly, the Voluntary Agencies should also have been represented on the Seminar. But, they were not. The point here is further illustrated by the final

report of the Seminar.

In all, it made a total of 40 recommendations on various aspects of primary, post-primary, vocational and technical education, examinations, special schools, teacher training, universities and administration. Of that number, only one of the two recommendations on the last mentioned aspect of education is relevant to this study. It was the twenty-ninth on the list. Under it, the Seminar surveyed the systems of control and administration of education in France, Sweden, and the United States and concluded:

"We recommend that Boards of Education should be established in Nigeria at national, regional, provincial or local levels to advise the Ministries of Education on all educational matters affecting their areas. We also recommend that the Boards of Education at the provincial and local levels should be given a measure of executive power so as to bring local communities into closer contact with the planning and operation of educational institutions in their area. The membership of the Boards should be drawn from the communities which they serve. The existing regional boards should be reconstituted to reflect the above mentioned new trend in educational administration".<sup>22</sup>

The Report of the Seminar was published and circulated in 1963. At that time, the general climate of opinion was very much in favour of Government take-over of the schools. No further time was to be wasted in implementing the recommendations which all the Commissions had been advising since 1958. The first step in that direction was the abolition of the Voluntary Agency Inspectorate established by the Colonial Administration in 1927. This was to take effect from 1st January, 1964. The Government announcement explained that the new measure was "aimed at avoiding unnecessary duplication and waste of personnel".<sup>23</sup> The Ikoku Conference had made a recommendation along this line. Its adoption a year later may be seen as evidence of the influence of special commissions on Government policies for education in the

<sup>22</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Report of the Comparative Education Seminar Abroad. Official Document No. 21 of 1963. Government Printer, Enugu, 1963. pp. 1-10.

<sup>23</sup>Annual Report 1962, p. 12.

Region, or as Government use of such commissions as policy instruments.

To further illustrate the point that the Regional Government was on the winning side at this time, not even the RCM protested against the abolition of the Voluntary Agency Inspectorate. Instead, all the Missionary Societies came together and made a joint application to the Government for permission to recruit Administration Assistants. The employment of this group of personnel would enable the Missions cope with the duties which the Visiting Teachers and Supervisors whose posts were being abolished, performed for them. They argued that unless this was done, it would be difficult for the Managers alone to give adequate attention to their schools and at the same time, be able to organise refresher courses for their teachers as the Ministry of Education had directed them to do from time to time.<sup>24</sup> No evidence was found that this request was granted by the Government.

## 8.2 The Period 1963-1965

### 8.2.1 The Policy for Education 1963

From the abolition of the Voluntary Agency Inspectorate onwards, the Regional Government would appear to have moved fast to consolidate and expand its gains over the Missionary Societies. The announcement of the abolition of the Voluntary Agency Inspectorate was followed almost immediately by the issue of a new policy for education. It will be recalled that the last one was issued in 1954. The aim of the new policy was to ensure stricter control of the entire school system by the Government. To this end, the Ministry of Education was enlarged and given wider powers over the schools. The three main Divisions of the Ministry - Administration, Establishment and Finance, and the Inspectorate were all responsible to the Minister through the Permanent Secretary.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> ibid., p. 14.

<sup>25</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Policy for Education 1963. Official Document No. 7 of 1963. Government Printer, Enugu, pp. 1-3.

On Primary Education, the new Policy decried the continued existence of "non-viable schools" in the Region. The establishment of such schools was attributed partly to the enthusiasm generated by the UPE scheme of 1957, "and more strongly to the denominational and village rivalries leading to the establishment of more schools than necessary". The Government reiterated its determination to close or merge all primary institutions "whose services could effectively be covered by existing schools".

On Secondary Education, the policy was that the establishment of more schools at that level was not to be restricted. On the other hand, it was to be more carefully planned and directed "so that it does not get out of hand as has been the experience with primary schools". In addition, its curriculum was overhauled with bias for scientific, technical, moral and cultural education. Agriculture was made a compulsory subject for the first three years, and the teaching of French and some Nigerian languages was introduced in all secondary schools. The Government also proposed to establish new ones in which grammar, technical and commercial subjects would be taught. These were to "comprehensive" in type.<sup>26</sup>

The Policy for Education 1963 is important for two main reasons: one, it introduced new measures in the administration of primary and secondary schools which would not only feed the Government with up-to-date information on their operations but also, put it in a stronger position in controlling them.<sup>27</sup> Two, it was a restatement of the old policy of greater state participation in education and the means by which this was to be achieved in the future.<sup>28</sup> No evidence was found of any missionary reaction to the new policy.

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<sup>26</sup> ibid., pp. 4-5.

<sup>27</sup> See ibid., pp. 2-5.

<sup>28</sup> See ibid., pp. 1-2.

### 8.2.2 Other Related Incidents of 1963

In addition to the Education Policy of 1963, there were some other relevant and behind-the-scene events for the period up to the end of that year. So far, most available evidence points to the conclusion that the general policy of the Protestant Missions was to support the Government. On the other hand, there are records to show that the former had their grievances against the latter. But, one important point was that while the Catholics would air their grievances in public through the press and protest demonstrations by their women members, the Protestants preferred to discuss their differences with the Government in closed-door meetings or through confidential letters. They would hardly call a press conference or organize protest demonstrations as was habitual with the RCM leaders.

By the end of this chapter, we would have seen several other instances to illustrate the above point. For example, in a letter dated 2nd May 1963 from the Secretary of the EEAC to the Minister of Education, the Committee complained that there was a "most conspicuous imbalance in the number of secondary schools allocated to the RCM and the Christian Council in favour of the former". The letter went on to support the complaint by pointing out that in 1962, 62 new secondary schools were given permission to open. Of that number, 23 went to the RCM, 15 to the Protestant Missions and the rest to Local Government Councils, local communities and private individuals. The Committee therefore argued that the allocation of more secondary schools to the RCM would suggest that it was the policy of the Government "to give the Catholics a permanent advantage over the Christian Council group".

In his reply dated 8th July, 1963, the Minister denied that there was any preferential treatment to the Catholics in the allocation of new secondary schools. His explanation was that the RCM made more applications in respect of areas less served with such schools than the Christian



Council group. He therefore advised the Protestant Missions to ensure that in future, their applications were made for areas where there were not already too many secondary schools. The note on which the letter ended is interesting. The Minister emphasised that the allocation referred to was made by his predecessor.<sup>29</sup> The interesting point is that the allocation was made by a Catholic Minister of Education, and a Protestant one, his successor was replying to the letter by the EEAC. The innuendo here is obvious and therefore deserves no further comment.

An action by the RCM two months after the above exchange of letters illustrates the difference between it and the Protestant Group in the attitudes of the two different camps towards the Government. In a letter dated 24th September, 1963, the eight Catholic Education Secretaries, Eastern Nigeria jointly urged the Minister of Education among other things to consider the extension of non-payment of fees to the senior primary classes (elementaries III-VI) with effect from 1964. At this time, fees were still being paid in these classes in the school system. They argued that "Free Primary Education is one of the basic rights of the citizens", and that the Government should do nothing "which would increase the parents' already financial burden. On the contrary, the aim ought to be to increase the number of non-fee-paying classes, and to reduce the ALC in classes where fees must still be paid". The point here is that unlike in the case of the Protestant Missions, copies of the Catholic Education Secretaries' letter to the Minister were sent to the Secretaries of the NUT, the CMS, the CSM and the Methodist Mission.<sup>30</sup> By this, the content of the RCM letter was not intended to be a confidential suggestion to the Minister. What is not clear is why the Ministry should put a copy of the RCM letter in one of its secret files after copies of it had already been sent to the other agencies. It is to be noted, on the other hand,

<sup>29</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. IN:(S) 16/S.1/1956.

<sup>30</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: File No 'Secret' ES. 102/71.

that the Protestant Missions marked most of their letters to the Minister "Confidential" and did not copy them to the other agencies.

At first, the suggestion for the extension of non-payment of fees to all primary school classes would tend to contradict the allegation that proprietors had surplus funds from their standard schools. If indeed this was so, the abolition of fees would not in fact make any difference. It would have meant that all school income would come directly from the Government, and there would have been no collection of the ALC or fees and all the difficulties associated with it.

It is difficult to understand why the RCM should be asking for the reintroduction of the UPE scheme to cover all classes so soon after experience had shown that the economy of the Region could not support it. In 1963 when the letter was written, only the last three of the six primary classes were to be fee paying in the new school year. The first three were to be fee-free. Secondly, sending copies of the letter to the other major interest groups in education, would suggest that the RCM was trying to project itself as the champion of the parents in the Region. Such a suggestion is more irresistible when it recalled that at the time, the Mission, through its constant attacks on, and protest demonstrations against the Government, had alienated the sympathy of many impartial observers to its cause.

A second piece of evidence of the somewhat reserved Protestant attitude towards the Government is contained in the EEAC Annual Report 1963. In it, the Secretary of the Committee complained that the Regional Board of Education of which he was a member, was being used by the Regional Government "to rubber-stamp unpopular decisions of the Cabinet". The Minister of Education had made it a habit to summon emergency meetings of the Board whenever the Government was about to carry out unpopular measures. At such meetings, the Minister would tell the Board on what measures to advise him and those on which it was to say nothing.

The above practice had been possible and successful because the Board membership was dominated by "County Council representatives who are the Ministers' own nominees". The Annual Report went on to say that in the circumstances,

"there is nothing the V.A. representatives can do than to register a protest and let the 'Ayes' have it. As soon as this is done, the Minister and his colleagues rush to the microphone and say 'We were advised to do so by the Board of Education which is made up of experts'. This was the method used in 1961 to reduce the length of primary school course from eight to seven years and in 1961 to increase the Assumed Local Contribution in the Senior Primary Classes".<sup>31</sup>

It should be recalled that under the Education Law 1956, 12 of the 26 members of the Regional Board of Education were appointed by the Minister to represent the Local Government Councils, and another 4 to represent the Teachers Unions. He also appointed another 2 members to represent the Voluntary Agencies other than the RCM and the Protestant Missions. The last two members were usually drawn from among the indigenous school proprietors most of whom were members of the ruling party. Thus, by the composition of the Board, the Missionary Agencies had only 8 out of the membership of 26.

The point made in the Annual Report is also important in another respect. It shows that the Regional Government was making use of all available means to carry through its educational policies.

The EEAC Annual Report 1962 had also lamented over the helplessness of the Protestant Missions in the face of the enormous strength of the Roman Catholic Mission in the Region. The Committee commented that for some years, its member missions had had no definite education policy,

"and have allowed things to drift, too often watching to see what the Roman Catholics did and deciding that it

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<sup>31</sup> The Christian Council of Nigeria: Eastern Education Advisory Committee, Annual Report 1963.

must therefore be in our own interest to do the opposite".

But considering the overall education scene and in the interest of the community, the EEAC would like to support those who advocate the abolition of denominational schools because of their tendency "to divide the community into sections having little understanding of one another". On the other hand, the EEAC must face up to the fact that: "We are living in a Region where the Roman Catholic Church is very strong", and where it had used that strength "to mobilize its members to insist on a denominational education for its own children. Where it has not been able to secure state backing for this policy, its members have been prepared to spend huge sums to maintain private schools outside the state system, though wherever it was politically feasible they have naturally fought hard to secure public assistance for parochial schools".

The Annual Report concluded by saying that if the Catholics succeeded in maintaining their own private schools, the members of the Protestant Churches would expect their denominations to do the same. From a realistic view of the situation in the Region therefore, it would be unwise "to encourage an all out attack on the Roman Catholic view", as this would only "increase denominational bitterness". All the same, the Protestants "should not support any move to do down the Local Authority Schools and return to a virtual monopoly of Church controlled schools".<sup>32</sup>

The above Annual Report of the EEAC is important for several reasons. One, it reinforces the point made earlier that the Protestant Missions supported the educational policies of the Government not because they agreed with them, but for fear of Catholic domination if they were to do otherwise. Two, while the RCM could mobilize its members to oppose the Government, or to raise money to open private schools outside the state

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<sup>32</sup>The Christian Council of Nigeria: Eastern Education Advisory Committee, Annual Report 1962.

system, the Protestants were not in a position to do the same. It was therefore in their own interest to support those who advocated the abolition of denominational schools. They also believed that such line of action would be in the best interest of the community as a whole.

In fact, as indicated earlier (Chapter 6.4), the problem of educational finance with the Protestant Missions got so serious in the 1960's that they requested the Regional Government to take-over their primary schools. With the re-introduction of the ALC in 1958, it became increasingly more difficult for the Missions to collect the local community share of the cost of primary education in full. The situation was made worse by the increases of fees for Standards III to VI and the factor for calculating the ALC from 30 to 36 in 1962 (see Chapter 6.4). By the following year, some of the Missions had incurred so much debts from unpaid ALC that the salaries of some of their teachers could not be met in full. For example, the accumulated debts of the Church of Scotland Mission from the ALC from 1959 to 1963 were as follows:<sup>33</sup>

| Year |     |     |     | Debt (£) |
|------|-----|-----|-----|----------|
| 1959 | ... | ... | ... | 8,785    |
| 1960 | ... | ... | ... | 10,362   |
| 1961 | ... | ... | ... | 17,538   |
| 1962 | ... | ... | ... | 28,817   |
| 1963 | ... | ... | ... | 40,258   |

The sharp rise between 1962 and 1963 illustrates the effects of the increases of the earlier year. The figures would also suggest that inspite of the higher government expenditure on primary education and the improved state of the Regional economy, the problem of financing the primary schools was on the increase year by year.

In 1963 too, the Methodist Mission had an accumulated debt of £25,000

<sup>33</sup>Christian Council of Nigeria, EEAC: Memorandum on Education Policy in Eastern Nigeria 1964 (an unpublished mimeographed document)p.1.

from the ALC. The other Missions had similar financial problem with their primary schools in varying degrees. The matter was discussed at one of the Protestant Missions' EEAC meetings held at Aba on the 11th of November, 1963. The Committee decided that the matter should be taken up with the teachers, and that they should be informed that unless the Government granted some loans to the Missions to pay their salaries, many of them "might have to discontinue their employment". In the meantime, the teachers were to be asked to accept part payment of their salaries.<sup>34</sup>

It was in response to this financial situation that the Regional Government restored the factor for calculating the ALC to 30 pupils per class per teacher in 1964, and also extended the non-payment of fees to Standard III (see Chapter 6.4). Although both measures brought a great deal of financial relief to the Missions, some of them were still unable to balance their primary education budget. It was for this reason that the Protestant Missions requested the Regional Government to take over their primary schools.

In a joint request by all the member Missions of the Eastern Education Advisory Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria, they offered to co-operate with the Government in working out the details of the take-over. One of their conditions was that they should be allowed to continue with the teaching of religion in all the schools founded by them.

Thus, in addition to the fear of possible Catholic domination of the Region, the Protestant Missions would voluntarily hand over their primary schools to the Government for financial reasons. According to the Secretary of the EEAC at the time, they wanted thereafter, to "concentrate on such other areas as the education of the handicapped".<sup>35</sup> Those two considerations are important for they partly explain why the series of

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<sup>34</sup>Secretary, EEAC: Minutes of a Meeting Held at Aba, 11th November, 1963, p.1.

<sup>35</sup>Interview with Mr. R.I. Uzoma, former Secretary, Eastern Education Advisory Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria. Enugu, 28th November, 1975.

controversies over primary education in Eastern Nigeria tended to be a direct confrontation between the Roman Catholic Mission on one hand, and the Regional Government on the other. It was partly for those two reasons that the Protestant Missions appeared to have supported the Government during most of the conflicts.

### 8.2.3 The Delay in the Payment of Teachers' Salaries

The argument over who was responsible for the delay in the payment of teachers' salaries did not end in 1961. It was only suspended while teachers in many parts of the Region continued to suffer. In 1964, however, the Government picked up the issue once more and set up a Committee to inquire "into the causes of delay in the payment of teachers salaries". Its Report was published soon after it was submitted to the Minister of Education.

In the first place, the Committee found that there were occasional administrative delays in the payment of grants-in-aid to schools. In its opinion, that did not constitute the main cause of some teachers not being paid for two or more months running together. The principal cause was the fact that many Missionary Agencies were "running a large number of unviable classes". Even when grants were paid in time, such Agencies still found it difficult to raise the ALC proportion of the salary bill and this, in many cases, resulted in either part payment or delay of the whole salary. The difficulty in raising the ALC was caused by the duplication of educational facilities - the existence of two or more schools in villages where one would have been enough. The Committee further pointed out that the whole problem was rooted in the inter-denominational and village rivalries in the establishment of schools.

Another finding was that contrary to the Government regulation, some of the Voluntary Agency Managers were in the habit of keeping a common account for both their aided and unaided primary schools. The effect of this was that quite often, grants for the aided schools were spread out by such

managers to cover the unaided ones, and in the end, the salaries of the teachers in both categories of schools were delayed as the grants would normally not be enough to cover their entire salary bill.<sup>36</sup>

The findings of the Committee added another point to the score board of the Government by exonerating it from blame for the late payment of teachers' salaries. The Voluntary Agencies who undertook to run uneconomic schools for religious advantages were mainly to blame. As we shall see presently, the Government capitalized on the findings and made the widest possible use of them to its own advantage. None of the Missionary Societies disputed the Report and this was used as a further evidence to convince the teachers that the Voluntary Agencies were responsible for their sufferings. Although not stated, the argument would be that if they (the teachers) would support the Government efforts for greater state control of the schools, their problems would be partially over.

From then onwards, there was a great deal of emphasis on the issue of the partnership arrangement as it affected the teachers. It was often repeated that one of the major reasons why the Government wanted to take over the schools was to ensure better conditions of service for teachers. The official argument was that as long as they were not directly employed and responsible to the State, it was unreasonable to ask the Government to extend the same service conditions to them as those enjoyed by the civil servants.

It was in the above mood of triumph and as the champion of the cause of the "unhappy circumstances" of the Voluntary Agency teachers that the Protestant Minister of Education, Dr. S.E. Imoke reported the findings of the Committee to the Eastern House of Assembly on the 29th September, 1964. In the speech, the Minister announced that in recognition of, and "in order to alleviate the unhappy circumstances to which Voluntary Agency

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<sup>36</sup> Annual Report 1964, p. 12.



teachers have been reported or known to fall victims", his Ministry ordered an investigation into the basic causes of the teachers' plight. He went on to emphasize that it was the determination of his Ministry "to secure for the teachers a reasonable expectation of regular income and other amenities".

On the actual findings of the Committee, the Minister asserted that it was then clear to everybody in the Region and to the teachers in particular, who had been responsible for their sufferings. He went on to say that the investigation revealed:

"that the conduct of some school managers have been found to be very much below expectations. Irregularities, fraud, mismanagement and abuse of funds have been sordid revelations of the investigations".<sup>37</sup>

The Minister was placing the matter before the House in order to get its mandate to punish or reproach those managers who had "clearly betrayed their trust". The mandate was spontaneous as members from all sides shouted "punish them! punish them!"<sup>38</sup> We shall suspend further discussion of the findings here and return to them as part of the evidence in respect of some of the major charges against the partnership arrangement in the next chapter. In the meantime, suffice it to re-emphasise that the Government gave the widest possible publicity to the findings as a part of its campaign for the support of the teachers and the general public in its bid to secure greater control of primary education.

In consonance with the new Government strategy of courting the goodwill of the teachers and their unions, the Minister also announced in the same speech that he had been notified of a demand by the Nigeria Union of Teachers for the establishment of a National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers (NUNCT). His Government had replied to say that it would support

<sup>37</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates 1964-65, op. cit. p. 81.

<sup>38</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

"any proposal for the establishment of a permanent and regular negotiating body which will constantly review the conditions of service for teachers". It was the policy of the Eastern Nigeria Government that there should be "uniformity of conditions of service for all employees in the Federation, teachers not excluded".<sup>39</sup>

At the same time as the Government was all out to make friends with the teachers, their Union, the NUT was actively mobilising all its members throughout the country for a show-down with their employers, the Voluntary Agencies for better conditions of service. It is also interesting that until that particular point in the struggle, the RCM had openly discouraged its teachers from joining the NUT. Instead, the Mission had encouraged them to form a separate union, the "Catholic Teachers Association".

The RCM authorities had argued that:

"they did not want a secular organisation external to Mission control to be able to influence their teachers on issues of salaries, conditions of service, tenure, transfer and other matters".

The argument was on the grounds that the loyalty of the teachers should be first "to God and His Church".<sup>40</sup>

But at the heat of the struggle with the Eastern Nigeria Government, the RCM turned round to urge all Catholic teachers in the Region to enrol as members of the NUT and to pay their dues regularly to the Union.<sup>41</sup> This was particularly so after the 32nd Annual Conference of the NUT had, in January 1963, passed a resolution mandating all its Regional Executive Committees to employ all constitutional means to achieve the NUT demand that the ultimate control of primary and secondary education in the Regions be vested "with the Government and to eliminate the Voluntary Agencies as middle-men particularly in the area of financial control".<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> ibid., p. 83.

<sup>40</sup> Smyke, R.J., and D.C. Storer, Nigeria Union of Teacher: An Official History, op. cit. p. 80.

<sup>41</sup> ibid., p. 204.

<sup>42</sup> ibid., pp. 215-6.

Under the above circumstances, it was clear that the teachers and their Union had become a force whose support and alliance were very much sought after by the two main disputants in educational matters - the RCM and the Government. The former would want its teachers to infiltrate the rank and file of the Union as active members. Through them, the Mission would be able to influence some actions of the NUT in the Region and therefore counter an all-out support of the Government by the Union. It was indeed a battle of wits.

The belated efforts of the RCM to get its teachers to join the NUT was history repeating itself. It will be recalled that before the Nationalists actually came to power, the Mission had also discouraged its members from going into politics. That was one of the reasons why the early indigenous governments of Eastern Nigeria were dominated by Protestants. But as soon as the Mission realized that unless it had its members in the Government, all its schools might be taken over by the State, the RCM went all out to sponsor its members to contest elections into the Eastern House of Assembly.

To return to our main argument, the struggle from the new dimension of putting the welfare of the teachers in the forefront was not pursued any further until the following year, 1965. It had to wait for other developments which were to enhance its potency as an effective instrument in the hands of the Government for the attainment of its own objectives and secondly, those of the teachers. In the mean time, we shall go on to discuss other major incidents of 1964 before returning to the involvement of the teachers in the struggle.

#### 8.2.4 The Issue of Common Religious Syllabus for all Primary Schools

As we saw earlier, the duration of the primary school course was reduced from seven to six years with effect from 1st January, 1964. For this reason, there was a general revision of the entire curriculum. In the case of Religious Knowledge, the Ministry of Education seized the

opportunity to propose a common syllabus for all primary schools and presented it to the Missionary Societies for their views and comments.

In their response, the Protestant Missions said inter alia "their Churches would co-operate in trying a common Religious Knowledge Syllabus provided there is an additional period on the Timetable for purely denominational Church teaching and doctrine". They further argued that "after all there is a common Religious Knowledge Syllabus for the West African School Certificate examination, the only difference being in the version of the Bible used".<sup>43</sup>

The reaction of the RCM to the proposal was that of outright rejection. In a letter addressed to the Minister of Education and dated 22nd January 1964, the Catholic Bishops of Eastern Nigeria said among other things:

"We the Bishops of Eastern Nigeria, as the authoritative religious teachers of the Catholic Church in the Region, judge it our sole right to decide what doctrine should be taught to our children".

After decrying what the Bishops described as the "imposition of a common religious syllabus on all primary schools by the Ministry of Education", they concluded by saying:

"We consider it our duty to state categorically that we cannot accept a common syllabus for our schools".

The letter was signed on behalf of the Bishops by Archbishop Charles Heerey, CSSP.<sup>44</sup>

In his reply to the RCM dated 13th February 1964, the Minister expressed surprise that

"Christian Leaders should want to perpetuate divisions even at this time when everybody is happy about the ardent moves towards Church unity".

The letter went on to point out that the proposed syllabus was produced after a lot of research and advice from knowledgeable quarters both in

<sup>43</sup> Eastern Nigeria Board of Education: Minutes of its Meeting Held on the 24th September, 1964.

<sup>44</sup> Ministry of Education Enugu: File No. IN(P) 3803/116.

Nigeria and overseas, and that the Government had expected the religious leaders to examine what the Ministry had done and after that,

"submit criticisms and suggestions as to how it could be improved, so that the final product might be acceptable to all".

In conclusion, the Minister emphasized that there could be no question of the Government backing down on the proposed common religious syllabus for primary schools in Eastern Region. The only alternative he could suggest was for the RCM and the Christian Council to get together to produce a religious syllabus acceptable to both groups.

Copies of the Catholic Bishops' letter and the Minister's reply were sent to the Anglican Archbishop of West Africa then resident at Onitsha, Dr. C.J. Patterson, and to the Secretary of the Christian Council of Nigeria, Rev. T.A. Adejunmobi together with a covering note in which their support for the Government's point of view was solicited.<sup>45</sup>

The cautious reaction of the English Archbishop Patterson is worthy of attention. He regarded the matter as an internal affair of the Region and that it should be settled at that level. Although he was the Head of the CMS in the Region and in the whole of West Africa, he would not like to be involved in the dispute.

In Dr. Patterson's letter to the Minister dated 20th February 1964, the Archbishop expressed the view "that the matter concerns Eastern Nigeria alone", and should therefore be dealt with at the Regional level. It was along this line of thinking that he had sent the letters from the Honourable Minister to the Secretary of the EEAC, Mr. R.I. Uzoma for necessary action. If the Minister wanted the personal views of the Archbishop on the matter, the latter would do so on his return from a tour of Western Nigeria which he was about to start when he got the Minister's letter.

On the same date, Archbishop Patterson wrote a letter to the Secretary

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<sup>45</sup>

Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. IN(P) 3803/115.

of the EEAC advising that the Protestant Missions in the Region must be very careful in handling the matter at that stage because "we do not want to back up either of the two disputants who seem rather rashly to have taken up deeply committed positions already". The Anglican Archbishop went on to suggest that the members of the CCN in the East should adopt one of two lines of action: either to produce a common religious syllabus jointly with the RCM or "study a Roman Catholic-drawn-up syllabus to see how far we could accept it as common ground". Furthermore, the Archbishop would not say anything to the Minister outside the general line to be adopted by the Eastern Education Advisory Committee of the Christian Council.<sup>46</sup>

The attitude of Archbishop Patterson to the dispute as outlined above illustrates the difference between the Irish Priests of the Roman Catholic Mission and the English Clergy still serving in the Region after the attainment of political independence. While the former gave press conferences and openly attacked Government educational policies, the latter made no public statements on any of the issues involved, and even when their Missions had taken a stand, it was not to be expressed by any of the English Missionaries. It had to come from one of the indigenous leaders of the Missions.

The above difference between the expatriate Missionaries of the two religious camps was the background to the saying that the Irish Priests failed to recognise the realities of political independence namely that the Africans were then in-charge. On the other hand, the English Missionaries still serving in the Region at the time, clearly recognised the above fact and for that reason, steered clear of being mixed up in the complicated educational issues that were inextricably tied up with local politics, religious loyalties, and the social and cultural values and the characteristics of the indigenous population.

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<sup>46</sup> Eastern Education Advisory Committee, Owerri: File No. ES:1A/52.

The RCM did not stop its opposition to the proposed common religious syllabus with the letter by its Bishops to the Minister. While the Eastern House of Assembly was meeting in March, 1964, the Eastern Nigeria Association of Catholic Women organised a protest demonstration through the streets of Enugu. The women later handed a petition to the Minister of Education demanding the withdrawal of the proposed syllabus. It was well known that the demonstration was inspired by the Catholic Bishops and Priests.<sup>47</sup>

In the end, the Government announced that the Board of Education had advised that schools should "fall back on the old syllabuses" while arrangements were being made for the RCM and the CCN leaders to meet to draw up a common one.<sup>48</sup> The meeting was actually arranged but, its outcome was overtaken by the outbreak of the national crisis in January 1966.

#### 8.2.5 The Reduction of Primary Education Course from Seven to Six Years

Again in 1964 when the proposal to reduce the primary education course from seven to six years as had been recommended by the Ikoku Conference was to be implemented, the members of the Association of Catholic Women organised a protest demonstration against it "claiming that their children's heritage was being despoiled".<sup>49</sup> They marched through the streets of Enugu and later submitted a petition to the Ministry of Education demanding that the duration of primary education be restored to its original eight years.

As in previous cases, it was generally believe that the demonstration was instigated by the Roman Catholic Church itself. If that was right, it is difficult to understand why the RCM would want to protest against

<sup>47</sup> See Daily Express, March 25, 1964, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> Eastern Nigeria, Board of Education; Minutes of its Meeting Held in April, 1964.

<sup>49</sup> Thom, A.H., (Expert - Unesco). "Background to Educational Administration in Eastern Nigeria" in Final Report on Primary and Secondary Education in Eastern Nigeria 1965, ILEP, Paris. (an unpublished document), p.3.

measures such as the above as it was not directly related to the reduction of Church influence in education. It was instances such as that that tended to create the impression that the Mission was just out to oppose the Government and to be noticed and heard on most educational issues.

#### 8.2.6 Continued Demand by the RCM for Permission to Open New Primary Schools

Finally in 1964, there was another protest demonstration by the Catholic Women Association in Port Harcourt, around Provincial Commissioner's Office against the refusal of the Regional Government to give approval for the opening of new Catholic primary schools in the Municipality. By this time, the Government would appear to have become used and immuned to Catholic women's demonstrations against its educational policies. Instead of giving approval for the opening of the new schools as demanded by the demonstrators, it made a grant of £100,000 to Local Government Councils throughout the Region for the construction of new classroom blocks in their schools. About 25 per cent of the grant was allocated to Port Harcourt.<sup>50</sup>

From the above incidents, one would say that by 1964, the Regional Government had come of age through experience over the years. It was no longer to be panicked into hasty decisions in order to appease the Catholics. Their opposition was being effectively contained as the Government was then enjoying more popular support for its educational measures than in 1957.

The above situation may be explained by the fact that over the seven year period (1957-64), the balance of power in education had shifted in favour of the Government. In the first place, it had become financially stronger and thus, better able to pursue and implement its policies. The

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<sup>50</sup> See Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. p. 324.



mass of the people would appear to have become more mature in their attitude and perception of the role of the Government as the supreme authority in their social welfare. This would have engendered the feeling that the Government had a duty towards the education of the people and that there was no longer any need for the divisiveness brought about by the presence of the Missions in education. The desire to better the lot of the teachers which the Government had professed would also have influenced the attitude of many people in transferring their support for greater state control of education. There were also the various measures which the Government had taken over the years to strengthen its own position.

#### 8.2.7 The National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers (NJNCT)

To back up its demand for better conditions of service for its members, the Nigeria Union of Teachers staged a nation-wide strike in June 1964. The strike was called off after the then five Governments of the Federation had jointly agreed to appoint a National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers. We shall examine the related aspects of the Council's work more closely because the major controversies between the East Regional Government and the RCM for the year 1965 were centred on its recommendations.

The Council was appointed in October, 1964, with the following terms of reference:

"To consider the gradings, remunerations and conditions of service of teachers and to make recommendations."<sup>51</sup>

Memoranda were submitted to it by:

- (i) The Nigeria Union of Teachers;
- (ii) The Five Governments of the Federal Republic of Nigeria;
- (iii) The Voluntary Agencies;

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<sup>51</sup> Federal Republic of Nigeria: Report of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers 1964-65, Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, 1965, p. 3.

- (iv) The Lagos City Council (Local Authority);
- (v) The Local Authorities of the Western Region;
- (vi) The Local Authorities of the Mid-Western Region; and
- (vii) The Local Authorities of the Northern Region.<sup>52</sup>

It may be noted from the above list that while the Local Authorities of the other parts of the country submitted their own memoranda to the Council, those of the East did not do so. It may therefore be assumed that the memorandum by the East Regional Government was intended to represent the views of its Local Authorities as well. If that was so, it would be a further evidence of the point made earlier that Church/State relations in the East were different from what they were in the other parts of the Federation. The suggestion here would be that the situation in the other Regions was sufficiently relaxed to enable their Governments and Local Authorities to present separate views on educational matters while in the East, that could not be done because of its more intense situation.

The failure of the Local Authorities in the East to submit its own separate memorandum to the Council could also suggest that they had no powers of their own in educational matters. In other words, they merely carried out the policies of the Regional Government with no discretion or provision for local initiative. Alternatively, it could also suggest that the views of the Local Authorities in the East might not have agreed with those of the Regional Government and in the circumstances, those of the higher authority had to prevail. Whatever might have been the case was likely to have been influenced by the absence of co-operation among the educational agencies in the Region.

In its Memorandum captioned "The Teachers' Case" the NUT complained against the gross inadequacy of teachers' remunerations, their intolerable conditions of service and their inequity "when compared with those of

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<sup>52</sup> ibid., p.7.

their counter-parts in the teaching field in Government and other sectors of the civil service". The teachers argued that the situation was "responsible for the exodus of a large number of able and conscientious teachers from the service of the Voluntary Agencies". In their view, the only solution to the problem was "the introduction of a unified teaching service" for all teachers in the country.<sup>53</sup>

The NUT also demanded among other things:

- (i) Equal pay for equal work;
- (ii) Equitable grading and new salary scale for teachers;
- (iii) Creation of promotion prospects for teachers;
- (iv) The retiring age for teachers to be raised above 55 years;
- (v) Leave and leave pay for teachers.<sup>54</sup>

In their own Memorandum, the Voluntary Agencies comprising mainly of the Missionary Societies, emphasized that religion was "essential to education not just as one subject squeezed into a secular weekly school curriculum but as a whole atmosphere that pervades and permeates the schools". As a group, they demanded a reconfirmation from the Governments and the Nigeria Union of Teachers that they (the Missionary Societies) were "truly and legally the proprietors of educational institutions and employers of the teachers in them".<sup>55</sup>

In their own separate memoranda, both the Government of the Federation and the four Local Authorities accepted all the NUT demands in principle. The Council was to work out the details of how they were to be implemented and submit to the Governments for consideration. After that, the Council's recommendations would be passed on to the various Governments for implementation as they applied to their areas of authority.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> ibid., p. 8.

<sup>54</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>55</sup> ibid., p. 9.

<sup>56</sup> ibid., pp. 10-16.

After considering all the arguments and evidence presented before it, particularly, those of the Teachers and the Voluntary Agencies both of whom were the principal contestants, the Council made the following recommendations:

"Since the request for uniform conditions of service and the establishment of unified teaching service featured prominently in the teachers' demands, and since these cannot be realised under the present arrangements, the Council recommends the establishment of Regional and/or Local School Boards to deal with appointments and promotions within the teaching service, discipline, collection and disbursement of funds and such other duties as the Minister of Education may from time to time direct provided that:

- (i) Voluntary Agency schools retain their denominational character and or proprietorship;
- (ii) Religious freedom as guaranteed in the Constitution of the Republic;
- (iii) There is adequate representation on every Board of
  - (a) Voluntary Agencies
  - (b) Government
  - (c) Local Governments
  - (d) Nigeria Union of Teachers and/or Northern Teachers association where applicable".<sup>57</sup>

Furthermore, the Council also recommended among other things that: graduate teachers' salaries be brought at par with those of their counterparts in the civil service; appointment to promotions posts to be made on merit; the retiring age for Voluntary Agency teachers to conform with the practice in the public service of the Regions concerned; and that leave allowances be paid to teachers.<sup>58</sup> All the recommendations outlined above were jointly accepted by all the Governments of the Federation.<sup>59</sup>

Before going on to discuss the effects of the Council on education in the East, let us point out that its recommendation on the Voluntary

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<sup>57</sup> ibid., p. 17.

<sup>58</sup> ibid., pp. 18-20.

<sup>59</sup> See Federal Republic of Nigeria: Conclusions of the Governments in the Federal Republic of Nigeria on the Report of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers, 1964-65. Sessional Paper No. 2 of 1965. Federal Ministry of Information, Lagos, pp. 1-7.

Agency schools retaining their denominational character under the Regional and/or Local School Board management, was similar to the "Scottish Solution" discussed earlier in Chapter One.

#### 8.2.8 The Nsukka Seminar

Soon after the Report of the NJNCT and the Government White Paper on it were published, the Government of Eastern Region requested the Institute of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, to organise a seminar on the implementation of the Council's recommendations as they affected the East. The main topic of discussion at the Seminar was the setting up of Provincial School Boards to take over the management of primary schools. This was the origin of the Nsukka Seminar referred to earlier in our Background to the Problem.<sup>60</sup>

It is to be recalled that the setting up of such Boards was what the East Regional Government had been wanting to do since 1956. As we saw earlier, it had also been recommended by three previous commissions - those of Dike, Ikoku and the Comparative Education Seminar Abroad. All the same, it could not be implemented because conditions were possibly not yet considered right mainly on account of stiff opposition from the RCM. Then that the same recommendation had been made from the national level by a Commission at which the Catholics were represented, the Regional Government would move fast to get it implemented before the RCM in the Region could mobilize its members to oppose it.

The purpose of the Seminar was to get the "experts" to work out the details of the proposed Provincial School Boards. The thirty-six participants at the Seminar were drawn from the following institutions and bodies as shown below:<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Interview with Professor B.O. Ukeje, op.cit.

<sup>61</sup> See the Nsukka Seminar Report (an unpublished document) pp. 1-2.

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|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|-----------|
| University of Nigeria, Nsukka | ... | ... | ... | 9         |
| University of Ibadan          | ... | ... | ... | 1         |
| Ministry of Education, Enugu  | ... | ... | ... | 5         |
| Local Government Councils     | ... | ... | ... | 11        |
| Roman Catholic Mission        | ... | ... | ... | 2         |
| The Protestant Missions       | ... | ... | ... | 4         |
| The Nigeria Union of Teachers | ... | ... | ... | 2         |
| Private School Proprietors    | ... | ... | ... | 2         |
| Total                         |     |     |     | <u>36</u> |

In his opening address to the Seminar, the Acting Minister of Education, Mr. D.S.A. Agim expressed the view that it could not have been held at a better time than when the Government was very much concerned with the problem of "the inevitable, though vexed, question of greater state control of education through the machinery of school boards". The Minister went on to say that the Regional Government would attach great importance to the conclusions reached by the Seminar coming as it were from a high institution of learning "dedicated to truth, knowledge and service". There was no doubt that the University was "better equipped to tackle difficult and delicate problems without prejudice, rancour or suspicion".

Mr. Agim invited the participants to bear the Dike and the Ikoku recommendations in mind in reaching their own conclusions on the topic. He concluded the address by revealing that at the time, the Regional Government was "examining what would be the nature and functions of the Boards and I would keep an open mind pending your recommendations before advising the Cabinet on final action".<sup>62</sup>

Among the delegation representing the Ministry of Education was the Chief Inspector, Mr. N.O. Ejiogu. In a paper entitled "The State and Education", which he presented on behalf of the Ministry, he stressed the need to eliminate uneconomic school units as a means of reducing the high cost of primary education. He blamed the existence of such schools on inter-denominational

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<sup>62</sup> ibid., p.5.

and village rivalries. Finally, Mr. Ejiogu called attention to the need for "uniform conditions of service for teachers" and the prompt payment of their monthly salaries. It was the view of his Ministry that one way of solving these problems would be the establishment of Provincial Boards to take over the management of primary education in the Region. The Chief Inspector therefore, urged the Seminar to bear these points in mind in reaching its conclusions and recommendations.<sup>63</sup>

In a seventeen-page paper entitled "The Future of Education in Eastern Nigeria: A Catholic View", and presented on behalf of the RCM by its General Education Secretary, Rev. (Dr.) Francis Arinze, the Mission argued that education was "a partnership between parents, Church and State" and should be treated as such.

On the role of parents, the paper stated that as the "natural life-giver to the child to be educated", the parents "have the prior right and responsibility to provide for the education of their children. Parental effort is indeed supplemented by teachers, the Church and the State but not supplanted". The first order of parents, therefore, entitled them to be given the freedom "to choose the school where their children are to be educated". According to the paper, it was in recognition of this natural right of parents over their children that the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights declared that "Parents shall have a prior right to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children".<sup>64</sup>

On the Church, the paper argued that it had been interested in the management of schools because "the aim of education is to lead man to God". For this reason, there was need for Church Schools since "religion is fundamental to education. Religion is not just one subject among many. It pervades every subject and every activity in the school". The Catholic Church, according to the paper, did not accept the theory of "undenominational Christianity" because "religion without dogma is

<sup>63</sup> ibid., Appendix A, pp. 8-10.

<sup>64</sup> ibid., Appendix D, pp. 2-4.

nobody's religion and lacks the necessary vitality to equip youth for life". Such a religion "has as much meaning as water without hydrogen and oxygen".<sup>65</sup>

In the case of Eastern Nigeria in particular, it was the view of the Mission "that it is much cheaper for the Government to run the schools in partnership with the Voluntary Agencies than to run the schools as Government or Local Authority schools". It was for these reasons that the RCM maintained that "denominational or Church schools are necessary. They stand for something fundamental".<sup>66</sup>

Turning to the role of the Government, the paper declared:

"The State exists to promote the common good - the temporal welfare of the citizens"; and that in educational matters, "it is the duty of the State to establish and insist on certain reasonable minimum standards which all schools have to reach in order to prove that they can contribute to the common good, and thus claim their share of the financial cake."<sup>67</sup>

The paper went on to say that in Eastern Nigeria, the State was already controlling most aspects of the school system such as: "registration and growth of schools, streaming, registration and salary scales of teachers, admission and dismissal of pupils, syllabus, textbooks, daily time-table, school calendar and the overall supervision and inspection of schools". The different proprietors were only left "with ownership and its allied responsibilities and with some details of management".<sup>68</sup>

For the State to go beyond those limits and decide on "a complete Government take-over of schools and a blanket condemnation of the efforts

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<sup>65</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

<sup>67</sup> *ibid.*, p. 9.

<sup>68</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.



and roles of the parents and the Church is a slap on the face of human dignity and desecration of human conscience". It must not be forgotten, the paper went on "that no Government ever had a baby and that parents are not fowls in a poultry farm. To impose this cruel theory on everybody is the height of insult to the human person."<sup>69</sup>

In conclusion, Rev. (Dr.) Arinze stated that the RCM would support the setting up of the School Boards

"if the idea was to raise the status of the teaching profession, to save teachers from the ignominy of waiting in vain for their salary, to protect teachers against possible victimization, to improve efficiency in schools, and to decentralize educational administration and authority. But if the School Boards are to be set-up in order to tamper with the rights of a proprietor, or to stamp out different ideologies in schools or to force a teacher on a proprietor in the name of efficiency then I cannot for one moment support such a proposal".<sup>70</sup>

The Catholic Paper was highly detailed and its arguments well marshalled out. In its final analysis, the position of the Mission was that it would not give up the management of its schools to the State. The RCM was prepared to co-operate with the State in the areas of standards and grants to the schools. On the other hand, it would not accept undenominational religious instruction in its schools and would not give up the responsibility for the selection of the teachers to teach in these schools.

As the establishment of schools along denominational lines was said to be one of the main causes of the existence of uneconomic school units and the delay in the payment of teachers' salaries, it would be difficult

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<sup>69</sup> ibid., p. 11.

<sup>70</sup> ibid., pp. 16-17.

to reconcile the objectives of the School Boards with the position of the Catholic Mission on the matter. That was the parting of the ways between the Government and the RCM and the hub around which one of the major conflicts revolved.

In their own paper entitled "Missionary Endeavour: Protestant View" and presented by Mr. E.O. Enemo, the CMS Diocesan Education Secretary for Onitsha, the Protestant Missionary Societies stated that they recognised the fact that the Government was annually spending millions of pounds on primary education. For this reason, they accepted as a matter of necessity that the State had the right to control "the way these millions are disbursed, and in what dividends they should bring to the nation". In conclusion therefore, the stand of the Protestant Missions was that:

"Surely, if School Boards will solve all our financial problems and usher in a better administration, better organisation and better human relations, every-body perhaps would welcome them".

The Protestants supported the establishment of the Boards in the belief that they would "be in the best interest of education, in the best interest of teachers, in the best interest of parents and society".<sup>71</sup>

In all, there were nine papers presented at the Seminar. Of that number, only the one by the RCM was opposed to the establishment of the Boards along the lines indicated above. The others were in support of the proposal. In addition, each of the three groups into which the participants had been divided to consider the issues raised by the papers, recommended that:

"School Boards should be established in Eastern Nigeria for the effective administration, organisation and financing of Primary Education in the Region".

Two days after the end of the Seminar, the Secretary of the Institute

<sup>71</sup> ibid., Appendix E., pp. 5-7.

of Education, Mr. C.N. Iroanya communicated its outcome to Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, Enugu in a letter dated 18th June, 1965. In addition to the overall recommendation, the letter gave an outline of what the Seminar would advise to be the composition of the Boards, qualifications for membership, functions, officers, religious instruction and the place of private schools under the proposed state system of management and control. From that moment onwards, there were swift reactions and counter-reactions by the three main educational agencies - the Regional Government, the RCM and the Christian Council.

#### 8.2.9 Missionary and Government Reactions to the Proposed School Boards

As was characteristic with the Protestant Missions, they would rather say nothing in public on any of the controversial issues with the Government. Accordingly, soon after the Seminar, the Secretary of the EEAC, Mr. R.I. Uzoma who was one of the participants, wrote in confidence to all the other Education Secretaries of the Protestant Missions. The purpose of the Circular letter No. ES: 1A/52 dated 19th June, 1965 was to warn them in advance "of what is coming" so that they might begin in time to prepare for it. This was all the more important because as of then, the Regional Government had no intention of consulting the Missionary Societies any further before passing the law for the establishment of the School Boards.<sup>72</sup> But later on, Catholic opposition to the proposed bill seemed to have forced the Government to consult the educational agencies before passing it into law.

Three weeks after the recommendations of the Seminar were submitted to the Regional Government, the Minister of Education, Dr. S.E. Imoke who had just returned from an overseas tour, appeared on the Eastern Nigeria Television Service programme "Face the Nation" on Sunday 11th July, 1965. At the Television Interview, the Minister announced that the recent NJNCT

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<sup>72</sup> CMS Education Office, Owerri: File No. ES:1A/52, p. 52.

in Lagos had recommended the setting up of School Boards by all the Governments of the Federation. He went on to say that this had been advised as a means of solving the problems of the teaching profession and that the Federal Government had accepted the recommendation and requested the Regions to implement it as it applied to them.

The Minister went on to say that in the case of the East, a group of 'experts' drawn from the two leading universities in the country, Ibadan and Nsukka, the Teaching Profession, the Local Government Councils, the Ministry of Education and the Voluntary Agencies had just concluded a two-day seminar at which they not only endorsed the NJNCT recommendation but also advised on the composition and the functions of the proposed Boards in the Region.

Secondly, the Government of Eastern Nigeria had accepted the recommendation, and would soon introduce a Bill in the House of Assembly for its implementation. The Minister recalled that two previous Commissions, those of Dike and Ikoku, and the Comparative Education Seminar Abroad had all recommended the setting up the Boards. The time had therefore come for his Government to implement the consensus advice of the experts particularly, in the interests of the teachers, and of education in general.<sup>73</sup>

Two weeks after the Minister's Television Interview, the Catholic Bishop of Port Harcourt, the Rt. Rev. G.M.P. Okoye, C.S.Sp., wrote an open letter to him and sent copies to the Regional Premier and to all the members of his cabinet, and to the Press. In the letter to the Minister entitled "Unacceptable to Parents", and dated 28th July, 1965, the Bishop said that his Mission, the RCM, understood that the Government would soon introduce a new system of primary education in the Region under which "virtually all effective participation will be denied to the Voluntary Agencies". If that were true, the Bishop went on, the RCM would like to inform the Minister that his Government could not introduce any educational reforms

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<sup>73</sup> Nigerian Outlook, Tuesday July 13, 1965, p.8.

without first of all, negotiating them with the Voluntary Agencies whose position as the proprietors of the schools had "many years of legal recognition".

The letter went on to say that from information available to the RCM from unofficial sources, the proposed reforms "appear to embody features unacceptable to parents, teachers and proprietors". The proposals were also unacceptable to all Catholics in the Region "on general educational and religious grounds as well as on grounds of equity". Under these circumstances, the letter went on, the RCM "have a clear obligation to use every constitutional means to see that fundamental rights are respected".

The open letter concluded by calling on the Minister to heed the timely warning of the Roman Catholic Mission. Unless that was done, there would be a state of "critical tension" between its members and the Ministry of Education. This would be unavoidable because the RCM was convinced that the partnership arrangement was "better and more economical" than the proposed state take-over of the primary schools.<sup>74</sup>

In his reply entitled "State Must Control Education", the Minister of Education referred the Bishop to the recommendations of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers in which the Catholic Mission and the other Voluntary Agencies "in the Eastern Region were adequately represented". The relevant recommendation was the setting up of Regional and Provincial Boards of Education by all the Governments of the Federation to take over the control and the management of primary schools.

The Minister wondered why the Catholic Mission representatives on the Council did not oppose this particular recommendation at the national level. He repeated his television statement that the East Regional Government was doing no more than what the Council had recommended to all the Governments

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<sup>74</sup> Nigerian Outlook: "New Education Plans: Bishop and Minister Exchange Letters". Monday, August 2, 1965, p.2.

of the Federation, and which the Federal Government had accepted and requested the Regional Governments to implement.

What the Council recommended, the Minister went on, was "in support of the long and world-wide established concept that the State and not the Church, has the right to control Education". His Government did not agree with the RCM that the partnership arrangement was better and more economical than the proposed new system of management and control which, the Minister argued, would "bring about savings from the merging of unviable schools and from closer control of school accounts". "This", the letter concluded, "is borne out of experience". Copies of the Minister's reply were also sent to the Premier, his cabinet colleagues and to the Press as the RCM had done.<sup>75</sup>

For nearly two weeks running after the exchange of the above letters, the members of the Eastern Association of Catholic Women were again in the streets of Enugu, Onitsha, Owerri, Aba, Port Harcourt and Calabar demonstrating against the proposed State take-over of "Catholic schools" as they described it. They submitted petitions to the Premier, the Minister of Education and to some of the Provincial Commissioners demanding the withdrawal of the proposed Bill which they also described as "a denial of fundamental rights of parents to choose schools for their children".

While the RCM and the Government were quarrelling and exchanging letters through the press, a meeting of the EEAC was summoned on the 19th of August 1965. The main topic on its agenda was to decide on a common stand of the Protestant Missions on the controversial issue of establishing the School Boards in the Region.

After hearing the reports of their representatives at the Nsukka Seminar, Misters R.I. Uzoma and E.O. Enemo; and another by Mr. Ekpunobi who had represented them at the NJNCT in Lagos, and debating them, the Committee

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ibid., loc. cit.

resolved inter alia that:

1. "The Protestant Missions in Eastern Nigeria should as a unit, accept the establishment of the School Boards as proposed by the Government;" and
2. "Religious Instruction should have a place on the Time-Table as at present but the number of periods allocated to it be increased".

At the end of the meeting, the Secretary of the EEAC, Mr. R.I. Uzoma was mandated to put up a memorandum to the Minister of Education conveying the support of all the Protestant Missions in the Region for his Government's proposed School Boards to take over the management and control of primary education. The Committee also resolved that unlike the RCM, the Protestant Missions, individually or collectively, should not make any public or press statement on the issues involved in the dispute. The resolution expressed the view that it was in their own interest to work from behind-the-scenes with the Government.<sup>76</sup>

The above stand adopted by the EEAC is further evidence of the policy of the Protestants to make their views known to the Government in private rather than in public. It also shows that true to their tradition the Protestants were more flexible in their attitude towards greater state involvement in education than the Catholics. It should also be recalled that at this time, some of the Protestant Missions, the CSM and the Methodists in particular, were in great financial debts over their primary schools and that they had jointly requested the Government to take them over on this account

The text of the EEAC Memorandum to the Government is interesting because it clearly spelt out the position of the Protestant Missions on the issue of State take-over of the Voluntary Agency primary schools. Part of it read as follows:

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<sup>76</sup> Eastern Education Advisory Committee: Minutes of its Meeting Held on 19th August, 1965 (CMS Education Office, Owerri).

"We realise that the day when the great majority of elementary schools were managed by the Christian Churches has gone for ever and that the part of Government and local authorities is likely to increase rather than to diminish ... We sympathise with the wastefulness of the present system with its many half-filled schools and its inefficiency when classes are combined under one teacher because the children are divided between too many nearby schools".

The Memorandum went on to say that members of the Protestant Missions were convinced that the Government proposals were "a sincere effort to give more 'tidiness' to the 'untidy' system of education especially in respect of financial control and evidence of waste". In recognition of the above facts, the member Churches of the Christian Council of Nigeria in the Eastern Region declared:

"We unanimously support the establishment of School Boards as proposed by the Government".

The Memorandum concluded by expressing the wish that all the religious denominations concerned would co-operate with the Government and with one another in the sacred task of educating the youth of the Region.<sup>77</sup>

From the general climate of public opinion in the Region at the time, it was clear the the Government was winning the battle, and that the Catholic opposition and pressures from its members within and outside the Government were not producing the desired effect of stopping the passage of the Bill. It was equally clear that the Government was determined not to miss this second opportunity of taking over the primary schools.

The above determination was strengthened by the fact that at the same time, the other two Regions, the West and the North, were taking similar measures to implement the recommendation of the NJNCT. They were however, 'luckier' than the East. In the first place, they were financially better

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<sup>77</sup>

CMS Education Office, Owerri Diocese Mimeographed Document  
dated August, 1965.



off. Secondly, in the West for example, the Protestants were in the majority, and as in the East, they also supported the Regional Government measures. The West therefore, had not the same amount of opposition from its Catholic minority as the East had from its Catholic majority. In the case of the North, most of the schools were already owned and managed by the local authorities and so, its Regional Government had very little of the Voluntary Agency problems.

In fact, School Boards similar to those proposed for the East were known to be already in operation in the North in particular, and in the process of being set-up in the other two Regions of the Federation.<sup>78</sup>

To return to the situation in the East, one of the arguments of the RCM was that the new Bill should not be passed without prior consultation with the Voluntary Agencies. The Regional Government accepted this view and arranged a meeting of all the educational agencies in the Region to discuss the setting up of the Boards.

#### 8.2.10 The Meeting of the Educational Agencies and Bodies in Eastern Nigeria 1965

The Government was confident that the proposed Bill enjoyed wide popular acceptance from most of the important educational quarters. For this reason, it was determined to reap the full advantages of the support the Bill enjoyed from the CCN, the NUT and the Local Government Councils - three of the main bodies involved in primary education. Between the 23rd and the 25th of August, 1965, the Government convened a meeting of the "Representatives of Agencies and Bodies Engaged in Educational Work in Eastern Nigeria" to work out the details of the proposed School Boards recommended by the NJNCT.

At the Meeting, the Educational Agencies and Bodies were represented as shown below:<sup>79</sup>

<sup>78</sup>Enemo, E.O. "Missionary Endeavour: Protestant View", in the Nsukka Seminar Report, op. cit. Appendix E, p.7.

<sup>79</sup>The Educational Agencies Meeting 1965, op. cit. pp. 30-1.

|   |       |     |       |
|---|-------|-----|-------|
| The Roman Catholic Mission                  | ...   | ... | 8     |
| The Eastern Nigeria Branch of the CCN       | ...   |     | 8     |
| The Eastern Nigeria Branch of the NUT       | ...   |     | 8     |
| Local Government Councils                   | ...   | ... | 4     |
| Other Bodies and Agencies                   | ...   | ... | 2     |
| Government Representatives and Officials... |       |     | 9     |
|   |       |     | <hr/> |
|   | Total |     | 39    |
|   |       |     | <hr/> |

It may be mentioned that all the Catholic representatives as well as those of the others were all Nigerians.

In his opening address to the Meeting, the Minister of Education, Dr. S.E. Imoke announced that the NJNCT had recommended among other things, "the setting up of School Boards as a means of ensuring uniform conditions of service" for teachers, and that the purpose of the Meeting was "to work out the details about such Boards" as he would like to be advised on that. He denied that the Government had planned "to exclude Religious Knowledge altogether in schools". What he had sought to do was "to put an end to unhealthy rivalries arising out of religious differences among the various Agencies". He had thought that this could be brought about by introducing a common Religious Syllabus in all primary schools.<sup>80</sup>

Responding on behalf of the Catholic delegation, Mr. G.C.M. Onyiuke observed that if the Minister had summoned the Meeting earlier, "the intervening atmosphere of misunderstanding which provided news item for press and radio, could have been avoided". He pledged the loyalty of the Catholics to the Government and regretted as "most unfortunate that there should appear to be a dichotomy of Government and Catholic in the Region".

It was the view of the RCM that "Teachers demand for better service

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<sup>80</sup> ibid, p.1.

conditions would appear to be being mixed up, unduly, with the establishment of School Boards ... A way should be found to meet that demand without tagging it on to the basic and more complex issue of the role of voluntary agencies in Education".

Finally, Mr. Onyiuke raised an objection to the number of delegates allocated to the Nigeria Union of Teachers adding that the composition of the NUT panel was "not in accord with the break-down figures given in the letter of invitation."<sup>81</sup>

Speaking on behalf of the Christian Council, Mr. R.I. Uzoma regretted that the Government had not taken the Voluntary Agencies into confidence. He could not understand why the Ministry of Education preferred to consult with the University of Nigeria first on the establishment of the Boards before summoning a meeting with the agencies directly involved with education. Mr. Uzoma pleaded that in future, "Voluntary Agencies be taken into greater confidence by the Hon. Minister, than at present."<sup>82</sup>

In another speech also on behalf of the Christian Council, His Lordship Bishop Uzodike said that the Churches were carrying very heavy burden and responsibility for the running of schools. According to him, the burden was "becoming unbearable and the Churches would like to concentrate on Church work leaving educational matters to those who wish to take over the responsibility".<sup>83</sup>

Dr. Alvan Ikoku, the leader of the NUT delegation and its National President, on behalf of his Union, stated that:

"It was not the teachers who brought up the question of School Boards (at the NJNCT). The Government panel pressed for a machinery to control the huge sums of money, running into several millions, which their respective Governments spend on Education. It was the Governments' quest for this machinery that led to the idea of School Boards".

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<sup>81</sup> ibid., pp. 1-2.

<sup>82</sup> ibid., p. 5.

<sup>83</sup> ibid., p.7.

Dr. Ikoku went on to say that in principle, the NUT had no objection to School Boards provided they "become an effective machinery for meeting the needs of teachers. What the NUT want is for Government to take over the full responsibility for payment of Teachers salaries".

On the composition of the NUT delegation raised earlier by the RCM, Dr. Ikoku replied that his Union had objected to an earlier proposal of its being "represented on Voluntary Agency basis ... on the ground that the Union is not established on religious basis". The Minister had also agreed with the NUT point of view and therefore, gave it the same block number of representatives as the two main religious denominations.<sup>84</sup>

Dr. Ikoku's statement on how the NJNCT came to recommend the setting up of the School Boards is important. It shows that contrary to the Government's emphasis on the recommendation as coming from the Council and the Teachers Unions, it was in fact, the Government of the Federation that initiated and pressed for its inclusion in the NJNCT's recommendations. All the same, it is to be noted that the NUT had no objection to the setting up of the Boards. This meant that at the Meeting, the Regional Government's proposal already had the support of both the NUT and the Protestant Missions as was conveyed by their memorandum to the Minister on the topic.

Mr. Moses, on behalf of "Other Bodies and Agencies", appealed to all the participants "to bear the interest of the Nigerian child in mind and to forget their differences and religious inclinations". They should aim at producing a report "whose recommendations will excel those of the other Regions in the Federation".<sup>85</sup>

Replying to the points raised in the opening speeches, the Minister explained:

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<sup>84</sup> ibid., p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> ibid., p.4.

"that it was never the intention to keep Voluntary Agencies and teachers out of the discussions. Rather the Ministry felt it would be better if it started from those not directly involved in the matter and got some basis on which to work before coming to Voluntary Agencies and teachers".<sup>86</sup>

At this point, the Minister left the Meeting to carry on with the task before it.

The Working Paper for the Meeting was prepared by the Ministry of Education. It outlined the Government views on the proposed School Boards - their composition and functions. All the specific proposals were debated one after the other. A number of counter proposals were made by the different Bodies and Agencies in some cases. In areas where there was no unanimous agreement, the Meeting decided to refer them back to the Government together with the different views expressed during the debate. They were to be left to the Government for final decision taking all sides of opinion into consideration.<sup>87</sup>

The areas on which there were no unanimous agreement would appear to have been on account of objections raised mainly by the RCM. For example, on the composition of the Boards, the Government had proposed that non-Nigerians were not to be appointed to their membership.

Speaking on the above provision on behalf of the Catholic delegation, Mr. Uwemedimo stated that it was "utterly unacceptable". He thought the "expressed disqualification of non-Nigerians is both inadvisable and irritating". He argued that "Government itself realizes the importance of expert knowledge and still recruits expatriate experts in the various fields".<sup>88</sup>

On the appointment and transfer of teachers, the Ministry proposed that the Boards:

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<sup>86</sup> *ibid.*, loc. cit.

<sup>87</sup> *ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>88</sup> *ibid.*, p. 8.

"shall be responsible for the appointment and transfer of teachers".

It was only the RCM delegation that opposed this and its counter proposal was "that the Proprietor shall have the sole right for the appointment and termination while the Area Boards served as teachers Court of Appeal."<sup>89</sup>

Thirdly, paragraph 10 of the Memorandum by the Ministry proposed that:

"The Boards by their nature shall be public boards serving as agents of Government and responsible to the Minister of Education".<sup>90</sup>

During the debate on this proposal "the Christian Council, NUT and other Agencies accepted the paragraph in essence". Speaking for the Christian Council, Mr. Enemo stated that his Council had always acknowledged the State as being responsible for the education of its citizens.

Speaking on behalf of the Catholic delegation, Rev. (Dr.) Arinze argued that it should be "concurrently stated that the Boards will be Agents of Government as well as of School Proprietors ... Education, it should be remembered, is a partnership of service between Government, the Church, the community and parents".<sup>91</sup>

At the end of the debate, "ALL BUT THE CATHOLICS AGREED that the paragraph should be reworded as follows:

"The Boards shall be public statutory Boards, under the general direction of the Minister of Education".

The Catholics wanted the paragraph replaced as follows:

"Education is a partnership between parents, Church and Government but not the responsibility of any one of these. The Board shall, therefore, be an Agent of the three bodies under the general direction of the Hon. Minister".<sup>92</sup>

Another example of Catholic objection was on the Government proposal that:

"All schools coming within this scheme shall be known

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<sup>89</sup> ibid., p. 16.

<sup>90</sup> ibid., p. 20.

<sup>91</sup> ibid., pp. 20-1.

<sup>92</sup> ibid., p.21.

as Public Schools and the teachers employed there as public servants. Schools staying outside the scheme shall be known as private schools, with no right of financial assistance from Government".<sup>93</sup>

While the other delegations accepted the Government proposal as stated above, the Catholic delegation argued that they would want "any schools which would opt out of the scheme to be still qualified for Government grants provided such schools were being efficiently run".

Its counter proposal was that:

"Schools which are at present in receipt of grants and which do not want to come within the scheme shall retain their rights to grants from Government unless disqualified on grounds of inefficiency."<sup>94</sup>

There were several other similar Catholic objections and counter-proposals to the original ones made by the Government. All such cases were referred back to the Minister of Education.

Finally, Rev. Fr. Ezeanya speaking on behalf of the RCM, "emphasized that the Voluntary Agencies and the County Council Schools should be treated alike in the question of expansion. He insisted that the prohibition against opening of new Schools and the expansion of existing ones by Voluntary Agencies should be lifted. THIS PLEA WAS UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED".<sup>95</sup>

In a valedictory speech on behalf of the Catholic delegation, Mr. Mbegbu addressing the Chairman, said:

"We on this side would like you to convey to the Hon. Minister of Education that we have had enough of being projected to the Nation and the World as the only people who are so conservative and so unprogressive as far as matters of Education are concerned".<sup>96</sup>

In his own speech on behalf of the Christian Council, Mr. Enemo said inter alia:

"We on this side feel that we will always like to be consulted on matters relating to our work - Education".<sup>97</sup>

In his reply, the Chairman of the Meeting promised "to place the various views before the Hon. Minister".<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> ibid., p.23.

<sup>94</sup> ibid., p. 24.

<sup>95</sup> ibid., p. 28.

<sup>96</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>97</sup> ibid., pp. 28-9.

<sup>98</sup> ibid., p. 29.

On the whole, although the RCM appeared to have disagreed with more number of the original Government proposals on the setting up of the School Boards than any of the other Agencies and Bodies, its general attitude, from the Minutes of the Meeting, was less rigid than on previous similar occasions. For example, its opening speech was quite conciliatory. It also joined the other delegations in unanimous acceptance of some of the Government proposals. The final copy of the Minutes was also signed by the leader of its delegation along with those of the others.<sup>99</sup>

All these together would suggest that the Mission was beginning to soften its former hard-line attitude in its relationship with the Government in educational matters. Perhaps, this was in recognition of the historical fact that the State ultimately wins in most such struggles, and the growing support for the Government from the public, the Teachers' Unions, the Protestant Missions and other sections of the community. However, this theory cannot be pursued further because, a few months after the Meeting, the national crisis interrupted the struggle and the implementation of the Law establishing the School Boards. There was, therefore, no other occasions to provide further evidence one way or the other, in relation to this theory until about five years later.

With the Meeting over, the Government embarked on the final stages of the long-drawn struggle up to 1965. The first step was the passage of a bill in the House of Assembly for the establishment of the School Boards.

#### 8.2.11 The Eastern Nigeria Education (School Board) Law 1965

The Bill for the establishment of the School Boards was tabled and passed in the Eastern House of Assembly on 30th November, 1965. Moving its

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<sup>99</sup> ibid., p. 31.



second reading, the Minister of State in the Ministry of Education, Mr. D.S.A. Agim, said that the purpose of the Bill was to implement the recommendations of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers. This was in connection with the setting up of School Boards to take over the management of primary education from the individual Voluntary Agencies. According to the Minister, the establishment of the Boards was desirable because:

"We have in recent times lived with stories of the sufferings of teachers as a result of non-payment or irregular payment of salaries to them. This situation has naturally led to the frustration, unhappiness, and; disgruntlement on the part of teachers, resulting in a deplorable fall in morale and efficiency in our schools. Intensive investigations which have been conducted by my Ministry have shown that these financial sufferings on the part of teachers could be avoided in most cases if proper use had been made of the grants paid in respect of teachers' salaries and communities were not unduly burdened with the responsibility of having to maintain more schools than they needed. Some Managers have been known to exploit the situation to their personal and dishonest ends".<sup>100</sup>

The Bill was seconded by the Minister of Health, Chief B.C. Okwu. During the debate, six other members of the House including the Premier, spoke all in support of the Bill. It was unanimously supported by all sides in the House. In the end, it was passed into law and then forwarded to the second chamber, the House of Chiefs.<sup>101</sup>

Again moving the First Reading of the Bill in the Eastern House of Chiefs on 1st December, 1965, Mr. Agim repeated that its purpose was to implement sections 36 and 37 of the recommendations of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers. According to the Minister, the East Regional Government was taking immediate steps to establish the School Boards in order "to ensure a happy and contented teaching service". He

<sup>100</sup>

Eastern Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates Eastern House of Assembly  
Official Report 1965-66. Government Printer, Enugu, p. 155.

<sup>101</sup>

See ibid., pp. 155-160.

recalled that in recent times, there had been numerous complaints concerning the sufferings of the teachers as a result of non- or irregular payments of their salaries. "This situation", he went on, "has naturally led to the frustration, unhappiness and disgruntlement on the part of teachers, resulting in a deplorable fall in morale and efficiency in our schools".<sup>102</sup>

The speech went on to outline some other evils of the partnership arrangement which the Bill was intended to eliminate. They included relieving the local communities of the burden of having to maintain and pay for more schools than they actually needed, and the "misappropriation of public funds by some school managers".<sup>103</sup>

During the debate, a member of the House who was a Catholic, Chief P.M. Abue complained that it was wrong to give equal numbers of representatives to the RCM and the CCN on the proposed Boards. This was because in his judgement, there were more Catholics in the Region than Protestants. The former therefore, should have more representatives on the Boards than the latter. Many members of the House shouted "No! No!" to Chief Abue's suggestion.

In his reply, the Minister explained that the statistics available to his Ministry showed that the membership of the Christian Council made up the "three big Missions - the Anglicans, the Methodists and the Presbyterians ... is very closely equal to the RCM".<sup>104</sup>

The Bill was read for the second time without any amendment and then went on to be considered by a Committee of the whole House. That was followed by its Third Reading after which, it was finally passed into law on the 1st of December, 1965.

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<sup>102</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Parliamentary Debates, Eastern House of Chiefs, Official Report. Fifth Session 1965/66. Government Printer, Enugu, 1966. pp. 62-3.

<sup>103</sup> ibid., p. 64.

<sup>104</sup> ibid., p. 65.

Under "Objects and Reasons" at the end of the main text of the Law, it was stated that:

"The object of this Bill is to implement the recommendation of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers in respect of the conditions of service for teachers, payment of their salaries and the management of the funds of schools in Eastern Nigeria maintained from public funds".<sup>105</sup>

Thus, the Government had continued till the end, to use the teachers' case as part of the spring board for the attainment of the desirable objective of greater state involvement in the control and management of education.

The main provisions of the Education (School Board) Law 1965 were as follows: there was to be a "Regional School Board" whose membership was to consist of:

|                                   |     |     |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Roman Catholic Mission            | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Protestant Missions               | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Local Government Councils         | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Nigeria Union of Teachers         | ... | ... | 2 representatives |
| Non-Missionary School Proprietors | ... | ... | 1 representative  |

The Chief Inspector of Education was to be an ex-officio member of the Board and another senior staff of the Ministry appointed to act as its Secretary. Its chairman was to be elected from among its members at its first meeting.<sup>106</sup>

The functions of the Regional Board were outlined as follows:

"(1) to make recommendations to the Minister in respect of - (a) promotions of teachers; and (b) disciplinary matters relating to statutory offences;

(2) to advise the Minister on the structure, content and design of curriculum for schools;

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<sup>105</sup> National Archives, Enugu: Law of Eastern Region of Nigeria 1960-65. Government Printer, Enugu, 1966. p. 219.

<sup>106</sup> ibid., p. 216.

(3) to take over the functions of the Board of Education and the Teachers Disciplinary Council under the Education Law:

(4) to serve as a consultative body and advise the Minister on matters relating to the conditions of service of teachers; and

(5) to hear appeals from the decisions of the Provincial Boards".<sup>107</sup>

The Law also provided for the establishment of a Provincial School Board in each of the administrative Provinces in the Region. Such a Board was defined as:

"a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal, may sue and be sued in its corporate name and acquire, hold and dispose of movable and immovable property."<sup>108</sup>

The members of the Provincial Boards were also to be appointed by the Minister and they were to consist of:

|                                   |     |     |                   |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|-------------------|
| Roman Catholic Mission            | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Protestant Missions               | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Local Communities in the Province | ... | ... | 3 representatives |
| Nigeria Union of Teachers         | ... | ... | 2 representatives |
| Non-Missionary School Proprietors | ... | ... | 2 representatives |
| Ministry of Education             | ... | ... | 1 representative  |
| Total                             |     |     | 14+               |

one representative from each Local Government Council in the Province.

The representative of the Ministry was to be the Chairman.<sup>109</sup>

By this arrangement, each Local Government Council in a Province was to have one representative on its Board. This meant that in a Province like Umuahia where there were eight such Councils, there would have been eight Local Authority representatives on its Board bringing its total

<sup>107</sup> ibid., pp. 216-7.

<sup>108</sup> ibid., p. 217.

<sup>109</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

membership to twenty-two. With the other 3 members to be appointed to represent the local communities who were likely to be supporters of the Government, and the one representative from the Ministry of Education, the Government would have at least 50 per cent of the membership on many of the Provincial Boards. Where the Government had the support of the NUT, the Protestant Missions and the non-Missionary School Proprietors, as was largely the case in the past, it would have little difficulty in pushing through its policies through such Boards. If this happened, the State would be in a stronger position over the control of the primary school system than before.

The Provincial Boards were to be responsible for among other things:

- (a) the appointment and termination of teachers for all public primary schools in their areas of authority;
- (b) the receipt and allocation of all funds meant for primary education;
- (c) the payment of teachers' salaries;
- (d) collection of ALCs as provided for in the Education Law;
- (e) the maintenance and repair of all public primary schools and their premises;
- (f) the provision of equipment, library and recreational facilities;
- (g) making recommendations to the Minister in respect of the opening, closing or merging of public primary schools in their areas of authority; etc.<sup>110</sup>

In the appointment and termination of teachers, however, "the Provincial Board shall act on the recommendation of the proprietor of the public school concerned".<sup>111</sup> This was the only function specifically assigned to the Voluntary Agencies. From the distribution of functions as outlined above, the responsibility for primary education was largely vested in the Provincial Boards in which, all things being equal, the Government would be able to exercise far greater control over their activities than on

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<sup>110</sup> ibid., p. 218.

<sup>111</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

individual agencies as was the case before.

The Law also provided that "the staff of the Provincial Boards shall be persons in the public service of Eastern Nigeria".<sup>112</sup> The position of the Boards' personnel as members of the civil service would expose them to a great deal of ministerial influence. This would further strengthen the hands of the Government in controlling the activities of the Boards. The staff would also be expected to take orders from the Boards who were their immediate boss. Such a situation was likely to engender conflict of loyalties. Whatever happened, the Provincial Board's personnel would have been very susceptible to some outside influence.

Furthermore, the Boards were to derive their funds from:

- (i) Government grants;
- (ii) Assumed Local Contributions;
- (iii) Endowments, gifts and donations to public primary schools in the Provinces.

All such monies were to be paid direct to the Provincial Boards through the Government Treasury in the area. It was also provided that "Every Provincial Board shall keep separate accounts in respect of each public school in its area of authority and no funds belonging or accruing to any public school shall be used for the purposes of any school other than that public school".<sup>113</sup>

Finally, the Minister was empowered to make regulations in respect of:

- "(a) the procedure and accounts of the Regional Boards;
- (b) inspection of the accounts of the Provincial Boards;
- (c) the finances of the Provincial Boards;
- (d) Local School Committee; and
- (e) grants to all public schools".<sup>114</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> ibid., p. 218.

<sup>113</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>114</sup> ibid., p. 219.

In relation to (d) above, the Law provided that "every public school shall have a Local School Committee".<sup>115</sup> This provision would have eliminated the practice in the Catholic system of administration whereby no such committees were provided for its primary schools, (see Appendix 8).

The firmness of the Government in implementing its policies at this time, is further illustrated by the final text of the Law. For example, the appointment and termination of teachers were made the responsibility of the Provincial Boards as the Government had originally proposed, and contrary to the Catholic counter proposal that they be made "the sole right" of the proprietor. In this case, however, the Boards were to perform the functions "on the recommendation of the proprietor of the public school concerned".

This could be seen as an act of compromise on the part of the Government. On the other hand, what happened in practice would have depended very much on who actually controlled the Boards - the Voluntary Agencies or the Government.

A more outstanding illustration of the Government firmness was provided by the definition of the Provincial Boards. Contrary to the Catholic demand that they be made the agent of parents, Church and Government, they were made statutory bodies in the same way as other public corporations and establishments.

Again, the Law defined 'public school' as "primary school wholly or partly maintained from public funds".<sup>116</sup> This definition would suggest that all schools in receipt of grants were in the public system and covered by the Law. On the other hand, the RCM had demanded a provision for a school to opt out of the system and still be qualified for Government grants.

It was while all the above incidents of 1965 were taking place that Rev. Fr. (Dr.) Francis Arinze published his Partnership in Education

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<sup>115</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>116</sup> ibid., p. 216.

Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria discussed earlier under the review of literature. It will be recalled that the booklet was a restatement of the traditional attitude of the Roman Catholic Church on state participation in education. Its argument was that because of the divine injunction of Jesus Christ to His followers, and the position of the Church as the agent of the family and the natural parents of children, the Church had greater claim on education than the state. The booklet was published at the peak of the struggle between the RCM and the Regional Government in 1965.

It will also be recalled that Dr. Tai Solarin, the Nigerian Social Reformer from the Western Region, replied almost immediately to Dr. Arinze's publication. The reply was entitled An Answer to Rev. Francis Arinze's Partnership in Education Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria. This publication reflected the popular view in the country at the time that the State and not the Church, had the right to control education. Its timing and the views it expressed also support the earlier point that at the time, many sections of the Nigerian community had come to accept education as a function of the state in the same way as was earlier the case in Western Europe.

With the passage of the Education (School Board) Law 1965, the conflicts up to that date came to an end. The national crisis, which brought educational activities in Eastern Nigeria to a virtual standstill, started about one month after the Law was passed and so it could not be implemented.



### 8.3 The Erosion of Voluntary Agency Powers in Education 1951-65

From the assumption of power by the Nationalists up to 1965, the virtual monopoly of primary education in particular by the Missionary Societies was gradually eroded by Government take-over of a large measure of control. The process of the erosion over the years may be summarized as follows:

#### I. Examinations:

Up to 1951, the Teachers' Grade II Certificate examination was conducted in two parts - the academic papers by the Government and the practical and professional subjects by the Voluntary Agencies. But in 1952, the new Government of Eastern Nigeria took over the entire examination from the Missionary Societies.

This was followed in 1954 by the Government take-over of the Primary School Leaving Certificate examination also from the Voluntary Agencies.

A year later, the State also took over the conduct of three other examinations from the agencies. These were those of Teachers' Grades I and III Certificates and the Modern School Certificate Examination.<sup>117</sup>

Thus, by 1955, four years after the Nationalists came to power, the final examinations of all the educational institutions were taken over by the State from the Missionary Societies. The School Certificate examination for the secondary level was already being conducted on behalf of the Central Government by the Cambridge University before the assumption of power by the Nationalists.

#### II. The Regional Board of Education: Membership and Functions:

Under the Colonial Education Ordinance 1948, the Missionary Societies were in the majority in the membership of the Regional Board of Education. In addition to its advisory role to the Government, the Board was also vested with some executive functions in the areas of opening and closing

<sup>117</sup>

Information supplied by the Chief Registrar of Examinations, Ministry of Education, Examinations Division, Enugu.

of schools in consultation with the Deputy Director of Education (see Chapter 4.4).

But under the Eastern Nigeria Education Law 1956, the Voluntary Agencies lost their majority membership of the Board to the Regional Government and Local Authority representatives. The executive functions of the Board were also withdrawn and vested in the Minister. It was left with only the role of advising the Minister on educational policies and other matters referred to it from time to time.

### III. Government Grants to Voluntary Agency Schools:

Under the Colonial Government, grants were paid directly to the Missionary Societies for their schools. But the Education Law 1956 provided that grants could be paid to them through the Local Government Councils. This enhanced the involvement of the Local Authorities in the control of the school system.

### IV. School Fees:

In 1956, the responsibility for fixing the fees paid by students in their institutions was removed from the Voluntary Agencies. From that date, the Regional Government performed the function of fixing and regulating the fees to be charged in schools and colleges.<sup>118</sup>

### V. School Timetable and Calendar:

The same Law also empowered the Regional Government to fix the duration of school hours per day and to prescribe the time-table to be followed by the schools. Their calendar was also to be determined by the Government from that date. Before the enactment of the Law, these functions were performed by the individual proprietors for their schools.

### VI. Teachers' Disciplinary Council:

Finally, in 1956, the discipline of teachers in Voluntary Agency employment was taken over by the Government through the establishment of

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<sup>118</sup> Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. p. 16.

the Teachers Disciplinary Council. This meant a reduction in the power of the Missionary Societies over their teachers. Before that date, the agencies were responsible for disciplining their teachers.

#### VII. Opening of New Primary Schools within the Public System:

In 1959, the ban on the Missionary Societies from opening new primary schools within the system partly financed from public funds, which was first proposed in 1956, became operative. It had been suspended then following serious objections by the RCM in particular. In all appropriate cases, all such new primary schools could only be established by the Local Government Councils. By this restriction, the Voluntary Agencies were not to expand their primary education facilities beyond their existing levels. This would enable the Government or the Local Authorities to acquire greater share of primary school education while the Missionary Societies expanded no further.

As a result of this policy measure, in 1956 for example, the Missionary Societies together controlled 99 per cent of the total number of primary schools in the Region and 98.2 per cent of their enrolment. But by the close of 1965, both percentages had been reduced to 75.1 and 80.8 respectively. In-between the two dates, the percentage of the schools controlled by Local Authorities went up from 0.8 to 24.7, and their enrolment from 1.4 to 19 per cent. These figures show that during the period, the State gained more share of educational control while the degree of the Voluntary Agency share was reduced.

#### VIII. The Abolition of the Voluntary Agency Inspectorates:

Until 1963, the Voluntary Agencies had their own Inspectorates existing side by side with that of the Ministry of Education. But with effect from 1st January, 1964, the former was abolished leaving the latter to perform the inspection of all schools in the system. By this, the power of the Missionary Societies to influence and regulate what went on in the schools was reduced in favour of the Government.

# IX. The Education (School) Board Law 1965:

Under the Education (School Board) Law 1965, the individual Missionary Societies lost a great deal of their remaining powers to a public authority, the Provincial School Boards responsible to the Ministry of Education. Among some of the powers transferred to the Boards were: the appointment and termination of teachers, payment of their salaries, collection and disbursement of all monies for all public primary schools, maintenance and repair of school premises, the provision of their equipment and recreational facilities, etc.

In the case of the RCM in particular, it also lost the power of their Parish Managers as the sole authority in the management of its primary schools. Under the Law, every primary school was to be under the direct management of a Local School Committee appointed by the Boards.

On the whole, the Education (School Board) Law 1965 was the one single measure that took away the greatest amount of powers from the individual Voluntary Agencies. However, as the Law was never implemented, the position and the powers of the Missionary Societies in education remained as prior to 1965 until the end of the national crisis in 1970.

If the Law had been implemented, the Voluntary Agencies would have been left with:

- (a) the ownership of the primary school buildings;
- (b) representation on the Boards of Education;
- (c) the right to be consulted on the appointment of teachers for the primary schools founded by them;
- (d) the teaching of religion in those schools;
- (e) the ownership and management of their secondary schools; and
- (f) the training of teachers, and the ownership and management of the training colleges.

But under the state school system (see Chapter 10.2), nothing whatsoever was left for the Missionary Societies.

On the whole, over the fourteen-year period, 1951-65, the power and the influence of the Missions were gradually and consistently weakened and those of the State strengthened at every turn. The complete removal of the Voluntary Agencies from the school system came with the Education Edicts of the 1970's discussed in Chapter Ten.

#### SECTION FOUR

THE CHARGES AGAINST THE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT  
AND THE STATE TAKE-OVER OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE CHARGES AGAINST THE PARTNERSHIP ARRANGEMENT RE-EXAMINED

#### Introduction:

At different times in the course of the dispute between the Government and the Missions over the control of schools in Eastern Nigeria, a number of accusations were made by Government and its supporters against the partnership system, in support of the campaign for a reform of the management arrangements. It is important to examine these charges in some detail both in order to understand and make critical assessments of the role and motivations of the two parties to the dispute in Eastern Nigeria; and also as a basis for a more general conclusion on the strengths and weaknesses of the partnership arrangement.

The questions examined in this chapter are as follows:

- (i) What were the charges and when were they made?
- (ii) How far were they substantiated?
- (iii) In so far as they were substantiated, did they represent irresponsibility on the part of the Missions or was government negligence also involved?
- (iv) To what extent were any recorded shortcomings inherent in 'partnership', and how far were they the outcome of actions specific to the situation in Eastern Nigeria?

The main body of the chapter begins by listing the main charges against the partnership arrangement. Their validity is then examined in some detail in the light of available evidence and consideration is given to whether the partnership system and/or some other factors were responsible for the problems identified.

The main charges may be outlined as follows:<sup>1</sup>

- I. Inequitable conditions of service for teachers as compared with those of their counterparts in other employments.<sup>2</sup>
- II. Employment of too many expatriate staff by the Missionary Societies.<sup>3</sup>
- III. Discrimination in the admission of pupils, and in the employment of teachers on grounds of religion.<sup>4</sup>
- IV. Division of local communities into rival factions.<sup>5</sup>
- V. Establishment of more schools than were actually needed.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> During the period of the partnership arrangement, the main charges against it were repeatedly made by the Government, its supporters and the teachers themselves. Because these criticisms were so frequently made, only the main instances in the case of each of them are referenced here.

Soon after the schools were nationalised in 1970, some of the major charges as they are outlined below, were published in a twenty-page pamphlet issued by the East Central State Government justifying the take-over of the schools. See Ministry of Information and Home Affairs, Enugu: The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System 2. Government Printer, Enugu, 1971.

<sup>2</sup> The Phillipson Report 1948, op. cit. p. 101; see also Symke, R.J., and D.C. Storer, Nigeria Union of Teachers: Official History, op. cit. pp. 10-11; The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 45; Parliamentary Debates, Eastern House of Assembly 1965-65, op. cit. p. 47; Report of the National Joint Negotiating Council for Teachers 1964-65, op. cit. pp. 7-16; Ministry of Information and Home Affairs, Enugu: The Public Education Edict and Teachers. Government Printer, Enugu, 1971. pp. 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Debates Eastern House of Assembly 1964-65. op. cit. pp. 125-6; see also Ministry of Information and Home Affairs, Enugu: Know Your Government 2: The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System. Government Printer, Enugu. 1971. p. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for Introduction of Universal Primary Education 1953. op. cit. p. 9; see also The Dike Commission Report. op. cit. p. 44; Solarin, T., An Answer to Rev. Francis Arinze's "Partnership in Education Between Church and State in Eastern Nigeria". op. cit. p. 14.

<sup>5</sup> The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. pp. 1 and 3; see also Ejiogu, N.O. "The State and Education" in the Nsukka Seminar Report, op. cit. Appendix A. p. 8; Ukeje, B.O., "Organisation, Administration and Control of Education in Eastern Nigeria" in the Nsukka Seminar Report, Appendix G.p.4.

<sup>6</sup> Policy for Introduction of Universal Primary Education 1953. op. cit. p.9; see also The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. pp. 42-3; The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p. 1; The EEAC Memorandum on Education in Eastern Nigeria. August, 1965, op. cit.



- VI. Excess cost of education and financial irregularities in the Voluntary Agency school administration.<sup>7</sup>
- VII. Wasting of public funds in maintaining the Voluntary Agency Inspectorates, and paying the salaries and expenses of their school Managers and Supervisors.<sup>8</sup>
- VIII. Denial of active local participation in the management of the Voluntary Agency schools.<sup>9</sup>
- IV. Obstructing co-ordinated planning and control of the school system.<sup>10</sup>

9.1 Inequitable Conditions of Service for Teachers as Compared with those of their Counterparts in other Employments

Under this heading, there were three main charges made up as follows:

- (i) Lack of uniform conditions of service:
  - (a) among the Voluntary Agencies themselves, and
  - (b) between the Voluntary Agency teachers in general and those teaching in government schools.
- (ii) Lack of job security for Voluntary Agency teachers.
- (iii) Maladministration in respect of Voluntary Agency teachers' pay. The

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<sup>7</sup> Annual Report 1949/50, p. 42; see also Parliamentary Debates Eastern House of Assembly 1964-65, op. cit. pp. 81-2; Know Your Government 2: The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System, op. cit. pp. 13-15.

<sup>8</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Policy for Education 1963, op. cit. p.3; see also Ministry of Information and Home Affairs, Enugu: The Economy of the New Public Education System, Government Printer, Enugu, 1971, p.2.

<sup>9</sup> The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.3; see also Ministry of Information and Home Affairs, Enugu: The Place of the Community in the Public Education Edict, Government Printer, Enugu, 1971, pp. 2-3.

<sup>10</sup> The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p.33; see also The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.2.

specific charges were:

(a) not being paid the correct amounts as prescribed by the Government;

(b) late payment of their monthly salaries; and

(c) illegal deductions and fines being imposed on the teachers.

(i) Lack of uniformity among the Voluntary Agencies:

It will be recalled that the Government had, in 1936, laid down the minimum salary scales to be paid to voluntary agency teachers in all aided schools. The scales were revised and continued in force under the Education Ordinance of 1948 (see Chapter 4.4). But apart from this one area of uniformity, it was common knowledge that under the partnership system, conditions of service for teachers differed from one missionary agency to another. For example, while it took a qualified teacher upwards of five years to be appointed head of a school in some of the better established Missions, in others, newly qualified teachers from the training colleges were immediately appointed to such a position. The differences in the service conditions led to a great deal of frustration among the teachers and some difficulty in organising a strong professional association capable of fighting to improve their lot. Commenting on this problem in 1958, the Dike Commission stated that on the basis of the evidence before it:

"One of the root causes of the frustration so evident among members of the teaching profession stems from the rivalries and ideological differences which are so evident among the Voluntary Agencies and which make for the fragmentation of education. As a consequence, there are no uniform service conditions for teachers of the same basic qualifications, ability and experience ... prospects and opportunities for promotion differ from agency to agency. Teachers' loyalties are torn between their rival denominational interests and the interests of the profession as a whole. Hence teachers' organisations are weak and the profession suffers".<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 45.

(b) Voluntary Agency, and Government Teachers:

Right from the early days of the school system, the Missionary Societies maintained that it was wrong for their teachers to expect the same salary or conditions of service as their counterparts in government schools. In support of this stand, the attitude of the early missions to their teachers' demand for equitable service conditions was said to have been:

"We discovered you in the bush, converted you to the true faith, gave you clothes, training and jobs - please do not expect the same salary as a government teacher. To whom much is given, of him much is expected. You must sacrifice to help Christianity expand. Your reward will be ample in Heaven".<sup>12</sup>

It was this mission philosophy that was said to have made teaching in Nigeria "a dull, humdrum job that lacked security, status and opportunity for advancement". At the best, it was "an ordinary job", and at the worst, "a stepping stone to a better paying clerical position" in government service.<sup>13</sup>

On the teachers demand for equitable service conditions with civil servants, the Government maintained that it was wrong for it to treat the teachers who were employed, controlled and dismissed by the Voluntary Agencies, as if they were its own direct employees. This stand was repeated each time the teachers made the demand. For example, speaking on it on August 28, 1947 in an address to the Legislative Council, His Excellency, the Governor of Nigeria, Sir Arthur Richards, G.C.M.G. said among other things:

"... it is mistaken to suppose that Government can accept a direct financial responsibility for the remuneration of a large body of persons not in its employment or under its control".<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Smyke, R.J. and D.C. Storer, Nigeria Union of Teachers An Official History op. cit. p. 10.

<sup>13</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>14</sup>Phillipson's Report, op. cit. Appendix A. p. 101.

The Governor's statement was a reference to a recent petition by the NUT that its members be placed on the same salary scales as their counterparts teaching in government schools.

The disparity in salary scales between the Voluntary Agency teachers and those in government service continued up to the period of responsible Government and beyond. For example, in 1952, the salary scales of some groups in both categories of the teaching service were as follows:<sup>15</sup>

| Teachers' Qualification | Salary Scales                  |                                       |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
|                         | Voluntary Agency Teachers      | Government Teachers                   |
| University Degree       | £420x20 - 500x25 - 700         | £570 x 40 - 1,290                     |
| Grade I                 | £230 x 12 - 326 x 18 - 470     | £340 x 18 - 448 x 25 - 600            |
| Grade II                | £132 x 180 x 10 - 230x12 - 326 | £230 x 12 - 226 x 12 - 314 x 15 - 370 |
| Grade III               | £100 x 6 - 124 x 8 - 180       | £124 x 8 - 180 x 10 - 220             |

Government would do nothing about the disparity. It argued that the Voluntary Agency teachers were not its direct employees. The state only made grants in aid of their salary bill and prescribed the minimum scales. On their part, the Missionary Societies maintained that even if the Government were to direct that similar scales be paid to the teachers, and were prepared to make grants to cover the salaries of those in the assisted schools, they (the Missions) could not afford to do so for those in the unassisted schools. The Missions were already finding it difficult to pay the minimum scales to their teachers in their schools outside the assisted list. Thus, the disparity continued because the Government would not legislate that civil service scales be paid to the teachers, and even if it did, the Missions would be unable to pay such scales to the teachers

<sup>15</sup> Annual Report 1952/53, pp. 10-11.

in their unassisted schools. On this account, the system of education financing was more largely responsible for the existence of the disparity than the partnership arrangement per se.

There is evidence that the lot of the Voluntary Agency teachers remained basically unchanged till the outbreak of the national crisis in 1966. Commenting on it the year before, a Unesco expert attached to the Eastern Nigeria Ministry of Education said among other things:

"It is wrong in principle that one section of teachers, because they are employed in Government schools should be rated and paid as civil servants and not as teachers on one scale, while others, doing exactly the same kind of work in another type of school, should be paid and rated as teachers, not civil servants".<sup>16</sup>

In fact, at the peak of the Church/State controversy in the 1960's, it was generally believed that the unhappiness of the teachers over their conditions of service was adversely affecting the standard of education in the Region. Many people expressed the view that unless something was done, efficiency in the school system would continue to go down hill. For example, during a debate in the Eastern House of Assembly on 30th September, 1965, Chief B.E. Obi asked the Minister of Education when his Government would extend to the Voluntary Agency teachers the same conditions of service as their counterparts in the Civil Service. The questioner added that unless this was done, no reasonable standard of efficiency could be attained by "our schools". The differences in conditions of service were in respect of government and mission teachers. Those of the local authorities enjoyed conditions similar to that of their counterparts in the civil service.

In his reply, the Minister repeated the old argument that it was to be recognised that the civil servants were directly employed by the Government, while the Voluntary Agency teachers were the employees of the Proprietors

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<sup>16</sup>Thom, A.H., (Expert, Unesco), Primary and Secondary Education in Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. (Section Four), p.8.

or Managers of the schools in which they taught. It was therefore not logical for the Government to treat people who were not its own direct employees as if they were so.<sup>17</sup>

In 1965, too, it was widely reported that a lot of the Voluntary Agency Graduate Teachers were resigning their appointments to join the Government service as Education Officers because of the more attractive conditions in the civil service. The Voluntary Agencies expressed grave concern over the loss of their teachers to the Ministry of Education, and later took up the matter with the Minister through their representatives at the Regional Board of Education.

The Minister replied that there was nothing he could do about the complaint because recruitment into the Government service was the responsibility of the Public Service Commission which his Ministry did not control. The issue of the mass exodus of Graduate Teachers from Voluntary Agency schools was later taken up by the Board of Education. At the end of the debate on it, the Board passed a resolution calling on the Minister of Education;

"to advise the Public Service Commission not to employ teachers already employed by the Voluntary Agencies without demanding a discharge certificate, in view of the great hardship caused by sudden resignation of teachers, some of whom did not give any notice".<sup>18</sup>

Finally and as was shown in the last chapter, some of the recommendations of the NJNCT of 1965 were that graduate and other teachers' salaries be brought at par with those of their counterparts in the civil service; appointment to promotion posts on merit; retiring age for Voluntary Agency teacher to conform with the practice in the public service of the Region concerned and the payment of such leave allowances as cost of transport to and fro to all teachers in general. All these recommendations suggest

<sup>17</sup> Eastern Nigeria; Parliamentary Debates, Eastern House of Assembly 1964-65 op. cit. (Answers to Written Questions), Appendix p. 34.

<sup>18</sup> Eastern Nigeria Board of Education: Minutes of Its Meeting Held on the 24th of September, 1965, p. 7.

that before that date, disparities existed in those areas in the service conditions of the Voluntary Agency teachers as compared with those of their counterparts in other employments. Unfortunately, the recommendations were overtaken, particularly in the East, by the national crisis which started soon after they were made and accepted by the Governments of the Federation.

(ii) Lack of job security for Voluntary Agency Teachers

It will be recalled as was shown in Chapter Four that during the economic depression of the 1930's, the Voluntary Agency teachers' salaries were drastically reduced. On the other hand, their counterparts in the Government service were not similarly affected. It will also be recalled that it was this state of affairs that led to the strike action of the CSM teachers in 1936 referred to in Chapter Four too.

During the 1960's, it was widely known that the Voluntary Agency untrained teachers in the Region were subject to annual mass retrenchment not because this was absolutely necessary, "but" according to the Minister of Education, "because School Managers and Proprietors, understandably at times want to take the line of less resistance". This was in the sense that it was easier for the managers to serve letters of termination of appointment to teachers whose salary bill, the proportion from the ALC, they were not sure to raise in the new school year, than face the embarrassment of having no money to pay them after they had worked.

In their own defence, the school authorities said that they did so in order to get rid of teachers who were not likely to attract grants in the new school year. But in cases where the enrolment justified it after schools had begun, some of the teachers were recalled and re-employed. The net result was that many of them were made jobless for some two or more months in the year before those of them who were to be re-employed were called back. This problem was caused mainly by the ALC system.

In reporting the above unhappy lot of teachers to the teachers to the Eastern House of Assembly on 29th September, 1964, the Minister of Education announced that he was taking measures to enhance the job security for the teacher. With effect from January 1965, a new system was adopted whereby grants were made to the school proprietors in respect of all teachers in their employment as of 31st December the previous year for the first three months of the new year.

By February, the proprietors were expected to know how many teachers they needed for the new year in the light of new enrolment figures. From that, they could issue one month's notice of termination of appointment to such teachers whose services were no longer needed, to expire by the end of March.<sup>19</sup> This was merely a palliative measure in respect of the mass termination of the untrained teachers at the end of every year. The practice was known to have continued even after the Minister's intervention.

(iii) Maladministration in respect of teachers' pay

(a) Not being paid the minimum scale

As was shown in Chapter Four, in 1936, the Colonial Authorities discovered that some of the Voluntary Agencies were paying their teachers less than the minimum scales prescribed by the Education Code. In recognition of this, the Government directed that all assisted schools should thenceforth pay the minimum scales to their teachers, and this was to be one of the conditions for receiving aid from public funds. Nothing was done in the case of those in the unassisted schools as the Government had no direct control over them by that date.

This particular charge was made only in 1936. No evidence was found that it was ever repeated after that date. Even during the controversies of the 1950's and 60's, it was never mentioned again. But in the case of

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<sup>19</sup> Eastern House of Assembly: Parliamentary Debates Official Report 1964-65. op. cit. pp. 82-3.



the charge itself, the Colonial Government prompt action of making the payment of the minimum scales a condition for grant-in-aid, quickly brought it to an end. Similar firm actions by the Government in later years, could have gone a long way in helping the check some of the other mal-practices. That the Government seemed not to have taken firm disciplinary measures in proved cases of abuse contributed to perpetuate them, and this could be seen as an act of negligence on its part.

(b) Late payment of teachers' monthly salaries

On the charge that under the partnership arrangement, teachers' salaries were often delayed, there were many instances when this was said to have actually happened. For example, the Ministry of Education Circular No. F 9586/567 of 20th July, 1961, discussed in the last chapter, was issued on account of persistent complaints by the teachers. It will be recalled that the Missionary Societies did not dispute the main facts of the Circular. Instead, they contended that it was wrong to attribute the whole blame to them alone. They demanded that the Circular should be amended to show that part of the delay was caused by the late payment of grants to them by the Ministry of Education, and the failure on the part of some local communities to pay the ALC for their schools when it was due. These same points were repeated to the author by all the former Education Secretaries he interviewed as some of the causes of the delay in the payment of teachers' salaries under the partnership arrangement.

Again, it was common knowledge in the Region that many CSM teachers went for months together without salaries. For instance, in 1958 and again in 1962, many of them were withdrawn from parts of Ogoja Province because their salaries were not paid for months on end. This was said to have happened because the local communities there failed to raise the needed ALC to augment the Government grants for their salaries.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>See Annual Reports 1958 and 1962, pp. 2 and 13 respectively.

Furthermore, between 1963 and 1964, Methodist school teachers in Isielu County Council area of Abakaliki were known to have gone without their salaries for five successive months - November, 1963 to March, 1964. It was on the last date that the teachers went on strike to back up the demand for their salaries. The Regional Government quickly intervened and set up a Commission to investigate the cause of the teachers' complaints.

The Report of the investigation revealed that the Methodist Mission had a total of 32 schools with 162 teachers in Isielu County Council area. There was no payment of fees involved in respect of the schools. This was because of the hostile attitude of the people toward formal school education. Parents there would not send their children to school. For this reason, the Government had introduced a system of compulsory education in the Province. Under it, "children may be ordered to attend school if there are not sufficient children already attending school from the village from which they come".<sup>21</sup> There was no direct payment of school fees in the Province. Instead, the ALC was raised through education rates levied and collected by the Local Government Councils.

Under the arrangement the running expenses of the schools including teachers' salaries, were met from block grants from the Regional Government and the County Councils. All the grants due to the schools from both sources had been paid to them as early as June, 1963. All the same, the Mission had failed to pay the teachers for five good months running together. The Investigation also found that the grants meant for the salaries had been diverted into some other uses such as the establishment of new schools or could not be accounted for by the Managers.

The Isielu County Council was so indignant over the above incident that it immediately passed a resolution praying the Minister of Education to empower it "to take over all Methodist Schools in the area". In his reply,

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<sup>21</sup>Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for the Introduction of Universal Primary Education, op. cit. p. 2.

the Minister contended that the action suggested by the Council was not the immediate solution to the teachers' plight. Instead, the Ministry took immediate steps under which the Mission was "compelled to find money to pay the teachers". There were similar incidents in respect of the CMS in the Rivers Province also in 1962 and some other Missionary Societies in Owerri Province.<sup>22</sup> But on the other hand, the Government could have paid the teachers directly without necessarily taking over the management of the schools. Its failure to do this would suggest that the teachers' plight was being used to further the cause of the educational policy of the Government.

(c) Deductions and fines being imposed on teachers

The Missionary Societies themselves admit that under the partnership arrangement deductions and fines were actually imposed on the teachers and their other employees. In the case of the CMS for example and as one of its former Education Secretaries described it to the author, the Mission had an organisation known as the "Anglican Workers' Association". It was made up of all the Mission employees "from the Education Secretary down to the smallest teacher in the village and from the Bishop down to the smallest Catechist". As a rule, every Mission employee was made to pay one per cent of his annual salary to the Association. The amount was deducted from their salaries in twelve monthly instalments. The money so raised and "which often came to thousands of pounds in a year was used in developing new secondary schools".<sup>23</sup>

The Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission had an organisation similar to that of the CMS. In a pamphlet entitled "Forward Movement" issued by its Synod, the highest authority of the Mission in the Region, and dated 16th January, 1962, it was directed that all its salaried members

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<sup>22</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: File No. IN: 133/557.

<sup>23</sup>The Interview with Mr. R.I. Uzoma, op. cit.

were to pay from that date, one-twentieth of their annual incomes to the Church. As in the case of the CMS, the annual levy was deducted from the teachers' salaries.

According to the CSM Synod Secretary, Rev. N. Eme, the money realized from the levy was used for the maintenance of the Mission schools, hospitals and award of scholarships to its deserving members for advanced studies both at home and abroad. The levy was not confined to only the Mission teachers and other employees. Its members in other employments were made to declare their annual incomes and to pay one-twentieth of it to the Church. The Synod Secretary added that in practice, the greater proportion of amount realized from this source was used in the establishment of new secondary schools.<sup>24</sup>

Levies similar to those of the CMS and the CSM also existed in the RCM. Its teachers and other employees were levied 4½d in the £ and this was deducted from their monthly salaries. The levy was known as "Annual Mission Collection" (AMC). It was not restricted to the Mission employees only. The other members of the Church also paid the AMC. According to the Mission, the amount realized from the collection was used for the maintenance of the Catholic Priests whom the Mission did not pay normal salaries but allowances. Most of the Priests were secondary school teachers or educational administrators at one of the levels in the school system.<sup>25</sup>

Another piece of evidence on the imposition of levies and fines on teachers is provided by a petition to the Minister of Education in 1964 by two American Peace Corps teachers posted at one of the Voluntary Agency secondary schools at Obizi, Owerri Province. In it, they alleged a number of malpractices by the school authority. Among them were:

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<sup>24</sup>The Interview with Rev. N. Eme, op. cit.

<sup>25</sup>Oburotha, J.O.; The Issue of Educational Control in Eastern Nigeria. B.A. Dissertation submitted to the Department of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1964, p. 28. (Mr. Oburotha was a former Catholic primary school headmaster).

(a) "Staff 'contribution' to the Mission Church withheld from salaries; and

(b) Fines imposed at the rate of £1 for each failure to appear at Mission Church services".<sup>26</sup>

Similar complaints were also received by the Ministry of Education against some other Voluntary Agency school proprietors. A list of all such abuses were compiled by the Ministry and forwarded to the Executive Council together with a lengthy memorandum by the Permanent Secretary. The Minister later announced to the House of Assembly that he had taken action against the Managers in all proved cases. He did not specify the exact nature of the action.<sup>27</sup>

Also related to levies in general were the ones imposed on secondary school students discussed in Chapter 6.4.

#### Summary:

As the teachers were affected under the partnership arrangement, the main charges can be said to have been substantiated. There was lack of uniform conditions of service among the Voluntary Agencies themselves and between their teachers in general and those in the government service. The Voluntary Agency teachers, particularly the untrained ones lacked job security. The Missionary Societies once in 1936, paid them less than the minimum scales prescribed by the Government. The payment of their salaries were often delayed, and deductions and fines imposed on the teachers.

The lack of uniform service conditions among the Voluntary Agencies was the inevitable consequence of the virtual autonomy of the different missions in educational matters, particularly, at the earlier period. The ideological differences among them and their varying financial circumstances also contributed to make lack of uniformity almost unavoidable. Because

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<sup>26</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: 'Secret' File No. 102/71. pp. 5-7.

<sup>27</sup>Eastern House of Assembly, Parliamentary Debates Official Report, September, 1965, p. 13.

the Missionary Societies could not come together to establish one central administration for their schools and also evolve a common service conditions for their teachers, the lack of uniformity could therefore be said to have been inherent in the partnership arrangement as it operated in Eastern Nigeria.

On the other hand, there is the question as to whether the Government could have stepped in to establish common service conditions for all teachers in the school system - both in the government and the voluntary agency schools. The argument that the Government could not do so because the voluntary agency teachers were not its own direct employees, does not seem convincing. One would sympathise more with the argument if it had been put in terms of lack of adequate financial resources. The closure or the handing over to the Voluntary Agencies of some government primary schools during the Colonial period would seem to have been dictated by Government financial inability to take over the entire responsibility for the teachers.

But in the case of the post-independence period, it is more likely, as later events (see Chapter 8.2) tend to suggest, that the Government allowed the lack of uniformity in service conditions to continue so as to use it later as a part of the weapon in its drive for greater state control of the school system. As it happened, with the offer of equitable service conditions with the civil servants, the teachers enthusiastically supported the Government proposed School Boards to take over the management of primary education from individual Voluntary Agencies.

It was probably on the above assumption that East Regional Government picked on the unhappy lot of the Voluntary Agency teachers as one of its reasons for wanting to take over the management of primary education. In that case, the offer of better conditions may have been seen by the Government as a potent future instrument for winning the support of the teachers for its educational policies.

For instance, nothing could have stopped the Government from extending the same service conditions to the Voluntary Agency teachers as those of its direct employees in the civil service while the Missionary Societies continued to manage the schools. The partnership arrangement as it operates in England and Wales illustrates that teachers in Church schools could enjoy the same conditions of service with civil servants without such schools being directly managed by the Government.

The poor conditions of service for the teachers could therefore be blamed on both the Missions and the Government - the former for creating the situation which gave rise to the problem in the first instance, and their subsequent unwillingness to come together to evolve a common pattern; and the latter for refusing to extend the civil service conditions to the teachers on the excuse that they were not its direct employees.

As much as the charges of lack of job security for the teachers and delay in the payment of their salaries were substantiated, were caused mainly by the system of educational financing - the ALC which accounted for part of the salary bill. Because the children were divided among many competing schools in one village, many of them were unable to have the hypothetical enrolment per class on which the calculation of government grant and the ALC was based. As a result, even after the Government had fulfilled its financial obligations to such schools, the ALC could still not be raised in full because some of the classes were only half-filled. This was one of the main causes of delay in the payment of teachers' salaries.

One effective way of eliminating the two problems would have been the merging or closure of all the unviable schools. But in doing this, strong opposition was often encountered from both the Missionary Societies and the local communities. The former would oppose it on religious grounds, and the latter, on account of their spirit of rivalry and competition which contributed to the establishment of more schools than were actually needed. The local communities would also have argued that the merger exercise

might make the schools too far for some of the children.

Thus, both the lack of job security for the teachers, and the delay in the payment of their salaries, can be held against the partnership arrangement to the extent that it contributed to the establishment of more schools than both the Government and the people could conveniently support, which in turn, created the two problems for the teaching profession. They were not inherent in the system and could have been eliminated by abolishing the payment of school fees. That this could not be done was because of the poor economy of the Region. They were purely financial problems which an improvement in the overall economy could have considerably helped to solve. State take-over of the schools without adequate financial resources would not have solved the problems. It was therefore, not necessary to take over the schools in order to eliminate them.

On the other hand, the Government could have adopted stricter measures to check the indiscriminate establishment of schools. That that problems continued to exist all through the period would suggest that the measures in that direction were not adequate. In that case, the Government would take a part of the blame for its failure to restrict the establishment of schools within the limits of the available resources.

The question of 'illegal' deductions and fines being imposed on the teachers, is a rather tricky one. On their part, the Church leaders argued that the deductions and fines could not be described as 'illegal'. According to them, the teachers were represented on the Church bodies and committees which took decisions on the subscriptions to be paid, and the fines to be imposed on members in different given circumstances. They also pointed out that the levies were paid not only by the teachers but also by the other Church employees and members not in its employment. They therefore argued that it was not right to single out the case of the teachers as if they alone paid the subscriptions and fines.



But the fact that some of the teachers often protested against the levies and have stopped contributing to them since the schools were nationalised,<sup>28</sup> would suggest that the subscriptions were not entirely voluntary. They were somehow imposed on the teachers, particularly, as the amounts were deducted from their salaries by the Missions themselves. If the levies were entirely voluntary, the teachers should have been paid their full salaries and allowed to pay the subscriptions later.

All the same, one could argue that the payment of subscriptions of some sort to one's association, be it a Church, a trade union, a social club, etc; is an acceptable practice in human society. Even if the Missions had not managed the educational institutions, their members would equally have been levied to raise funds for their activities.

On the part of the Government, if the subscriptions and fines were really 'illegal', one would have expected it to prosecute the offenders. There was no evidence that any action was ever taken against any of the Voluntary Agencies on that account. To have picked on these charges later as one of the reasons for nationalizing the schools, seems a part of the campaign for the support of the teachers.

The two changes themselves were neither inherent in the system nor was it entirely responsible for their existence. The Missions would still have levied their members including teachers even if they had not managed the schools. The partnership arrangement may however be blamed for making it possible for each of the Missions to levy not only the teachers who were its members but also those of the other denominations in its employment. If the Churches had not managed the schools, the levy would have been limited to teachers of their own religious affiliation. Having said this, if on the other hand the Government had wanted to stop the levies being deducted from the salaries of the teachers, it could have taken over the

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<sup>28</sup>The Interviews with some of the leaders of the RCM, the CMS, the CSM and the Methodist Mission, op. cit.

responsibility of paying them directly and not through the Missions. This could easily have been done without excluding the Voluntary Agencies from the management of the schools.

## 9.2 The Employment of too many Expatriate Staff by the Missions

Under this criticism, we have to distinguish between the expatriate personnel such as the British VSO's, the American Peace Corps, the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO) and the like, from those directly recruited by the Churches and who came to serve as Missionaries per se. The criticism applied to the second group of expatriates and not to the first whose salaries and allowances were partly or fully paid by their home Governments.

There were two sides to the criticism as it applied to the Missionaries. The first was the resentment over the failure of the RCM to Nigerianise the key posts in its educational establishments as the Protestant Missions had done. To that extent, the criticism was mainly directed against the Catholic Mission. The politicians were very suspicious of the expatriate Priests whom as will be shown presently, constituted 75 per cent of the Catholic School Managers of all descriptions. There were many other such Priests who served as teachers in Catholic schools. All of them who were associated with education in one form or the other, attracted some grants from public funds in respect of their salaries.

The presence of the Priests in the Region was resented by the politicians for two main reasons. The first was that such Missionaries were seen as the agents of colonialism which the nationalists regarded as their political opponent. They argued that as long as education in the Region was dominated by the expatriate Missionaries, what was described as "colonial mentality" among the local people would be difficult to eradicate. As we saw earlier, in Chapter Five, the politicians accused missionary education of making its products subservient to the white race in general,

and also of turning them into rebels against the indigenous cultural values and traditions. For the above reasons, the politicians argued that there was need to get rid of the Missionaries from the school system.

Another reason for resenting the presence of the expatriate Catholic Priests was the fact that through them, the State was said to be indirectly subsidizing the Church. As the present Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha stated during the interview with the author, the grants from public funds attracted by the Priests associated with education, went not to them as individuals but to the Church. This was because under the terms of their training and religious vows, the Priests were not paid normal salaries by the Mission. Instead, they were paid maintenance allowance from money raised through the Annual Mission Contribution by its members. By this arrangement, the grants meant for the salaries of the Priests were used by the Mission for its educational and other activities in the Region. As the politicians had no means of stopping this practice, they argued that it was better for the educational posts of the Priests to be taken over by lay Nigerian Catholics who were qualified to hold them. If that was done, the grants would no longer go to the Church, but to the people on whose account they were made.

The allegation that key positions in the Catholic Mission were dominated by expatriate Missionaries, was not without substance. For example, in 1966, the Mission in the Region had a total of 8 Education Secretaries and an equal number of deputies, 48 Supervisors and 96 Parish Managers of schools. Of the 48 Supervisors, 40 were expatriates, and of the 96 Parish Managers, 80 were non-Nigerians too.<sup>29</sup> Thus, of its 160 senior administrative personnel, 120 or 75 per cent were expatriates. This number did not include many others who were attached to the Mission secondary schools as Principals or teachers and others who worked in Hospitals and other

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<sup>29</sup> Interview with His Lordship, Dr. Mark Unegbu, Catholic Bishop of Owerri. 25th November, 1975.

establishments by the Church.

The position was different in the case of the CMS. In 1966, the Mission had three Education Secretaries in the Region. All of them were Nigerians. At the same time, its Owerri Diocese had 29 Senior Administrative personnel made up of one Education Secretary, two supervisors, thirteen Archdeaconry Managers and thirteen District or Parish Managers. All the 29 Senior Education Administrators were Nigerians. Of the Mission's three Bishops at the time, only one was an expatriate. The other two were Nigerians.<sup>30</sup>

The Methodist Mission had a total of 14 senior administrative personnel looking after its schools in the Region in 1966. They were made up of 2 Education Secretaries, 4 Managers and 8 Supervisors. All the fourteen key positions were held by Nigerians.<sup>31</sup> As for the CSM, it had a total of seven Supervisors and one General Manager who was the only expatriate among them.<sup>32</sup>

Thus, the allegation of employing too many expatriate staff applied only to the Catholics. As David Abernethy has rightly pointed out, the slow rate of the RCM in Nigerianizing its key positions can be explained by:

"the belatedness of the Catholic efforts to open secondary schools, the amount of training required for the priesthood, the unwillingness of young Africans to take celibacy vows, and a general unwillingness on the part of the Irish priests to accept the fact that colonial era was ending".<sup>33</sup>

All the above factors led to the presence of many expatriate Catholic Priests in the Region. This was resented by the politicians for two reasons: one, the identification of the expatriate missionaries with colonialism;

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<sup>30</sup> Interview with Mr. J.U. Ekeocha, former CMS Education Secretary for Owerri Diocese. 1st December, 1975.

<sup>31</sup> Interview with Rev. S.K. Okpo, former Methodist Mission General Manager of Schools. Oron. 26th September, 1975.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Rev. N. Eme, CSM Synod Clerk. Igbere. 4th December, 1975.

<sup>33</sup> Abernethy, D.B., The Political Dilemma of Popular Education, op. cit. p. 166.

two, the non-Catholics in particular, resented the advantages the expatriates conferred on the RCM. These included the grants they attracted to the Mission and their popularity among the masses which partly led to more Catholic members in the Region than Protestants. The first was said to have had the effect of perpetuating the so-called "colonial mentality" in schools. The second made the RCM richer and more powerful than the Protestants, and from that position of financial and numerical strength, the Mission was able to challenge the educational policies of the Government.

The second side to the charge under discussion was that the Missionary societies in general had too many expatriate teachers directly recruited by them, particularly in their secondary schools. Since many of them were specifically employed as qualified teachers, the State bore the cost of their passages, allowances and their salaries. The argument was that it cost more to employ an expatriate teacher than a local one. The State was therefore said to be spending huge sums of money on expatriate teachers directly recruited by the Missions.

In support of the above argument, the Ministry of Education quoted the statistics of the number of such expatriate Mission teachers and the Government expenditure on their salaries, allowances and passages for 1966. The Ministry publication was after the State take-over of the schools in 1970. As will be shown presently, before the last date, the Government did not accept this as one of the charges against the partnership arrangement.

The Ministry of Education publication showed that in the present Anambra and Imo States of Eastern Nigeria for example, there were 545 such teachers in that year. Their expatriate and leave allowances alone cost the Region a total of £125,790. This amount did not include their normal salaries. It was therefore argued that under the State school system, "the recruitment of expatriate staff will be undertaken only in exceptional circumstances", and that this would save a lot of public funds.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System, op. cit., p.17.

One could argue that the second side of the criticism was not quite convincing. There are three main reasons for this. In the first place, no evidence was found that any of the expatriate teachers came into the Region without the prior approval of the Government. Although the employment of teachers under the partnership arrangement was the responsibility of the school proprietors, on the other hand, it was the Ministry of Education that prescribed the staff entitlement of the schools.<sup>35</sup> After the Proprietor had found the teachers, he submitted their names, qualifications and experience to the Ministry for approval and the assessment of their salaries and allowances. If therefore the Mission schools had too many expatriate teachers, they were there with the full knowledge, consent and approval of the Minister of Education. The responsibility for their presence should therefore be shared by the Government and the Mission.

Secondly, there is evidence to show that contrary to the criticism, not all the expatriate teachers in the Voluntary Agency schools were directly recruited by the Missionary Societies. Many of them were recruited by the Government and seconded to the Mission schools. For example, in 1961, the Minister of Education himself announced to the Board of Education that the Government had recently employed 60 such teachers from overseas, and had posted them to different Voluntary Agency secondary schools in the Region. The announcement added that more of them were expected to arrive very shortly.<sup>36</sup> The actual recruitment was done on behalf of the Government by the Public Service Commission.

Finally, there is no proof that any indigenous qualified person was ever refused employment as a teacher in any of the Voluntary Agency schools through preference for expatriate staff. Although the allegation was actually made, it was the Regional Premier himself who refuted it. That was during a Parliamentary Debate in the Eastern House of Assembly in 1964. Mr. E.S. Umoh,

<sup>35</sup> See Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. pp. 53-4.

<sup>36</sup> Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: File No. IN.133/61-62/29.

a member for Enyong-North in the present Cross-River State, criticized what he called "the presence of too many expatriates in our school system". In his view, their recruitment was costing the Region a lot of money which could better be used "in giving employment to our own indigenous graduates". Replying on behalf of his Government, the Premier, Dr. M.I. Okpara, called on the House to deplore Mr. Umoh's statement about the expatriate teachers in the school system. The Premier pointed out that in whatever circumstance, it should be recognised that it was the Region that "went out for them, and they are here to assist us". In **concluding** the speech, Dr. Okpara declared:

"I think they have made commendable contributions to our educational development, and we should therefore, recognize that formally on the floor of this House".

When the question was put to the House, it was agreed that Mr. Umoh's statement was deplorable, and that the expatriate teachers would continue to be welcome in the Region for the commendable contributions they were making to the development of education in the Region.<sup>37</sup>

On the whole, the charge of employing too many expatriate staff by the Missionary Societies was incidental to the partnership arrangement. All the same, it is significant that the RCM was very slow in Nigerianising its key positions as the Protestants had done. Without the State take-over of the schools and the banning of expatriate missionaries in the Eastern States after the civil war, it would have been more difficult to eliminate this group of personnel from the Catholic school system.

On the other hand, it would have been unreasonable to stop the recruitment of expatriate teachers for the Region when there were not enough qualified local people to do the job. But if it was ever decided to ban their recruitment, it would not have been necessary for the Government to take over the

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<sup>37</sup> Parliamentary Debates, Eastern House of Assembly 1964-5, op.cit., pp. 125-6.

schools to be able to implement the decision. Thus, the employment of too many expatriate personnel by the RCM in particular, would seem not to have constituted a strong reason for a government to nationalise the school system as the 'problem' could equally have been solved by some other means. Here again, this charge may have been used to reinforce some other more important considerations.

### 9.3 Discrimination Against Pupils and Teachers on Grounds of Religion

This allegation was first made in the Government "Policy for Introduction of Universal Primary Education" issued in 1953. There, it was stated that:

"It is said sometimes that some Missions practise religious discrimination, even though they receive grants on condition that they do not do so".

The policy paper went on to suggest that "One way of putting an end to this practice would be for the Local Government bodies to manage the schools themselves".<sup>38</sup>

The same allegation was repeated in one of the memoranda submitted to the Dike Commission in 1958.<sup>39</sup> After the schools had been taken over by the State, one of the Government publications also stated that one of the aims of the new system was to save pupils and the teaching profession from discrimination on grounds of religion. According to the publication, the old system had discriminated against pupils and teachers on the grounds of their religious affiliation.<sup>40</sup>

Although the allegation was actually made on several occasions, on the other hand, it was difficult to substantiate any of the instances. The Ministry of Education at Enugu had no record of any proved case of religious discrimination. An indirect evidence, however, may be the establishment of

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<sup>38</sup>Eastern Region of Nigeria: Policy for Introduction of Universal Primary Education 1953, op. cit. p. 9.

<sup>39</sup>Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p. 43.

<sup>40</sup>The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System 2, op. cit. pp. 9-11.



two or more denominational schools in villages whose population and economic resources would not justify more than one such school. Reference has constantly been made to this aspect of the partnership arrangement in the previous chapters of this study and will be discussed later as a sub-heading in this chapter. The existence of such schools may be regarded as evidence that the Missions may have discriminated hence, the tendency of each of them insisting on the children of its members attending only the schools managed by it.

On their part, the Church leaders denied during the interviews that any of their former schools practised religious discrimination. The Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha for instance, stated that because of the provision in the Education Law that no agency should discriminate against any body on religious grounds, the Missions admitted pupils and employed teachers in their schools without taking their religious affiliation into consideration. According to the Archbishop, what happened in practice was that the people normally went to schools of their religious affiliation. It was for this reason that people of the same denomination tended to be found mainly in the schools of their own Mission. All the same,

"It was always possible to find in each school children of quite another religious affiliation. And then they would not be forced to have religious instruction in that school. If they were forced, it was wrong, no matter who did it, Catholic or Protestant, because it is not right to use force in religious matters ... The employment of teachers was more or less along the same lines."<sup>41</sup>

The other Church leaders also denied any form of religious discrimination in their former schools. The questionnaires administered on heads of primary and secondary schools on the religious affiliation of their pupils before and after the state take-over show that under the partnership arrangement, some Protestant children were always found in Catholic schools and vice versa, (see Chapter 10.6).

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<sup>41</sup> Interview with the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, Rev. (Dr.) Francis Arinze, op. cit.

On the whole, it is difficult to say whether or not the Voluntary Agencies discriminated against pupils and teachers on religious grounds as was alleged. According to the Church leaders, the segregation of pupils and teachers along denominational lines occurred because the people themselves chose to go to schools of their religious affiliation. But assuming that there was no overt discrimination by the Mission, on the other hand, their insistence on the children of their members attending only their own schools, in itself constituted some form of discrimination. It is also possible that although at the regional level, the official church policy may be against discrimination, its managers, principals and headmasters at the local level may practise it without the knowledge or consent of its leaders at the headquarters. On these bases and in spite of lack of more direct evidence, it could be argued that the allegation was not entirely without substance. If therefore there was some truth in the charge, it is difficult to see how else it could have been eliminated without excluding the Missions from the management of the schools. It was an inherent element in the partnership arrangement and could only have been removed by abolishing the system.

#### 9.4 Division of Local Communities into Rival Factions:

The charge under this heading was that the Missions divided local communities into rival factions and got each of them to sponsor the establishment of schools in the villages along denominational lines. This in turn led to dissipation of human and material resources arising from the existence of more schools than either the population justified or the economy could support. It was also argued that, by the insistence of the Missionary Societies that the children of their members should attend only the schools managed by them (see Chapter 8.4), the young people were being segregated in denominational schools and being made to see themselves as "Catholics", "Anglicans", "Methodists", "Presbyterians", etc, when the

imperative need was to give them a common outlook as Nigerians.

Before examining the extent to which this charge was substantiated, we are to recall the views expressed by Boyd and King on why the Christian Church went into the business of education in the first instance. According to them, it was:

"not because it regarded education as good in itself, but because it found that it could not do its own proper work without giving its adherents, and especially its clergy, as much of the formal learning as was required for the study of the sacred writings, and for the performance of their religious duties".<sup>42</sup>

Thus, the Church in general undertook the business of education not for its own sake but as a means to an end - the conversion of people to the Christian religion. It was for this reason, particularly in the early days, that Church and school went hand in hand. The principal interest of the Missions in the establishment of schools was to use them as a vehicle of evangelization.

The course of educational development in Eastern Nigeria was greatly influenced by two main factors. The first was the interest of the Missionary Societies in the establishment of schools. The second was the value system of the traditional society. Each of them reinforced the other. While the Missions were mainly concerned with winning converts, the people themselves were interested not in Christianity per se but in the school that went with it. On account of the 'instrumental' nature of the traditional society, the people quickly realized the immediate practical benefits of formal school education. It would admit them into the superior culture of the Western World and also serve them as a means of escape from the poverty of the land into the security of salaried employment. For these reasons, they welcomed any mission which would give them a school. In return, the people would become members of the Church and also provide land and materials for the establishment of a school

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<sup>42</sup>Boyd and King, The History of Western Education, op. cit. pp. 100-1.

and a Church in their midst.

Under these circumstances, while the Missions wanted the establishment of a Church first and a school second, the people wanted it the other way round. In the end, both of them had to be opened simultaneously. It was in this way that the "marriage of convenience" between the Missionary Societies and the local people began. Each side was prepared to patronize the other to get what it wanted.

Another important factor in the traditional society was its characteristic spirit of rivalry and competition as an accepted way of life. The local people, the Ibos in particular, are known to be always striving to be in the mainstream of anything that symbolizes progress. As soon as the establishment of a school in a village and the acquisition of academic certificates were perceived as symbols of progress, the people's spirit of rivalry and competition came into play. Each village or rival factions in the same village wanted a school of its own. The Missionary Societies took advantage of this and came forward to open as many schools in most local communities as they were requested to do in return for increasing their followings. By their response to the people's demand for education, the Missions helped to perpetuate and to reinforce the spirit of rivalry and competition inherent in the traditional society. By acting in this way, it could be said that the societies had committed "a sin of omission" by constituting themselves into agents of divisiveness and not unity, and thereby, failed to heal the rifts left by history and other forces in the traditional society. Thus in the same way as the Christian Church, starting from the sixteenth century, contributed to the division of Western Europe into warring factions, so also can it be said that the Missionary Societies exacerbated the division of Eastern Nigeria into rival factions. This is not the true Christian spirit - the brotherhood of man.

Having outlined the role of the Missions in the divisive charge, we

shall now examine what evidence there is to substantiate it. All through this study in general and in the last two chapters in particular, there have been many incidents and illustrations to the effect that as a result of "inter-denominational scramble for schools with religious expansion as the background motive",<sup>43</sup> more educational institutions than the people either needed or could support were established throughout Eastern Nigeria. We shall examine this further as a separate charge later in this chapter. But here, it is to be noted that in many cases, there were as many denominational schools in one village as there were rival religious groups there. Each of the Missions endeavoured to maintain effective influence on its members to ensure their continued support. By this means, the Churches served to divide rather than to unify the communities. The existence of such schools meant some unnecessary increase in the cost of education as many of them were unviable.

The missionary objective of using schools as a medium of evangelization which was said to have made their products to see themselves as "Catholics", "Anglicans", etc. and not as Nigerians, was reflected in the letters exchanged between the Catholic Bishops of Eastern Nigeria and the Minister of Education on the question of "Common Religious Syllabus for primary schools (see chapter 8.2.4); and the insistence by the Protestant Missions that the number of periods for religious instruction be increased and others provided for purely denominational doctrines as their condition for supporting the establishment of the proposed school boards. It was this insistence on using schools supported from public funds to propagate particular religious points of view that the opponents of Church in education were against.

The debate as to whether or not public funds should be expended to support the religious activities of individual denominations either directly or indirectly, is an endless one. Supporters of secular education

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<sup>43</sup>The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.1.

argue that it is morally wrong to do so. The Churches, particularly the RCM, argue that if their schools are denied assistance from public funds, their members as tax-payers are being denied a basic entitlement. Where this happens, they are forced to pay double tax - one to the State and the other to the Church for the maintenance of its schools. There is no single solution to the question. Each country solves it as it sees fit taking into consideration its own peculiar circumstances and needs.

The divisive role of the Missionary Societies in Eastern Nigeria was not confined to the establishment of schools. It was extended to politics, social life and development. For instance, it will be recalled that Mazi Mbonu Ojike failed the general elections of 1951 on account of his religious views and affiliation. Ten years later, another prominent protestant official candidate of the NCNC also failed to be elected because the Catholic majority among the electorates were overwhelmingly against his candidature (see Chapter 7.2.3). All through the period, there were other similar incidents in some other parts of the Region. Again, the formation of the "Eastern Catholic Council" and the "Convention of Protestant Citizens" and their activities also discussed in Chapter Seven, provide another illustration of the local communities being aligned along religious lines even in political matters.

On social issues, and community development projects, the people were also known to have been often sharply divided along religious lines. For instance, in the more religiously conscious communities, marriage between a Catholic and a Protestant was very rare. Community development projects often ran into great difficulties on account of disputes between rival religious groups in the villages concerned. An example of this was the case of a Community Hospital in the author's County Council area. Its opening was delayed for years because the people would not agree on whether the Hospital was to be managed by the Catholic or a Protestant Mission. Each religious group in the villages wanted its own denomination

to provide the personnel for the Hospital. In the end, the RCM, with its ready medical staff and preparedness to spend its own money to expand and equip it, won the battle. Although the Protestants were in the majority in the County Council area, they lost because none of their denominations could readily match the offer by the RCM.

On the whole, there would appear to be sufficient evidence to substantiate the charge that because the missionary objectives for education conflicted with those of the Government, the role of the former had the effect of dividing the local communities into rival factions. This was not only in relation to the establishment of schools but also in the areas of the political life and the social development in the Region. This was possible because the Churches had an enormous amount of influence on the people through their schools in particular. By the nature of the interest of the Missionary Societies in the establishment of schools, the divisive element can be said to be inherent in the partnership arrangement, and it is difficult to see how else it could have been eliminated without some drastic reduction of the influence of the Missions over the school system. It is also to be noted that a share of the divisiveness should go to the 'instrumental' nature of the traditional society. Both this and the interest of the Missions in the establishment of schools combined to produce some undesirable effects. Finally, although the state take-over of the schools may not remove religious rivalry in the society at large, on the other hand, it will eliminate the divisive element and its consequences on education in general. It could also be argued that the divisiveness and competition generated more enthusiasm and support for the schools. But the greater financial burden that went with these outweighs their advantages.

### 9.5 Establishment of more schools than were actually needed

As we have consistently shown so far in this study, the ownership of schools in Eastern Nigeria was a symbol of local pride and prestige. Most villages or sections or them wanted schools of their own and were therefore prepared to pay for them. They provided money, free labour and the site. On their part, the Missionary Societies took advantage of this local enthusiasm for education and each of them struggled and opened its own school in most of the villages. Although it was generally known that there were many villages with more schools than would appear to be actually necessary, apart from the merging exercise, neither the Government nor the Commissions of Inquiry made an attempt to document specific instances to illustrate the point. At the time, it was so obvious in many local communities that it was presumably believed that no case study was necessary to illustrate the point.

The general picture may however be illustrated with the case of Owerri Diocese of the RCM and the CMS in 1965 and 1975. Some of the related statistics on the Diocese according to the 1963 census were as follows:<sup>44</sup>

|   |     |     |                |
|---|-----|-----|----------------|
| Land area                               | ... | ... | 1,387 sq.miles |
| Population                              | ... | ... | 1,359,635      |
| Population per square mile              | ... | ... | 980            |
| No. of villages                         | ... | ... | 820            |
| Average population per village          | ... | ... | 1,658          |
| Population of primary school age (7-14) | ... | ... | 236,434        |

In 1965, the number of primary schools and their enrolments in the Diocese were as follows:

| Agency               | No. of Schools | Enrolment |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------|
| RCM <sup>45</sup>    | 403            | 120,230   |
| CMS <sup>46</sup>    | 282            | 27,569    |
| Others <sup>47</sup> | 638            | 116,055   |
| Total                | 1,323          | 263,854   |

An analysis of the above figures shows that the Diocese had an approximately two primary schools per village of 1,658 people. On the whole, there was an average of one school for every 1,028 of the population. The actual

<sup>44</sup> Nigeria, Department of Statistics: Population Census of Eastern Region of Nigeria 1963, Lagos, pp.16, and 24-5; see also Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Table 1.4, p.3.

<sup>45</sup> Figures supplied by Mr. J.K. Nzerem, M.B.E. former Catholic Education Secretary, Owerri Diocese, 2nd December, 1975.

<sup>46</sup> Figures supplied by Mr. J.U. Ekeocha, former CMS Education Secretary, Owerri Diocese, 1st December, 1975.

<sup>47</sup> Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. Table 2.1, p.7.



primary school enrolment was 27,420 more than the primary school age population (7-14). This would suggest that either the population of that age range was underestimated or that there were many pupils above 14 years of age in the primary schools. There was also the fact that the primary school age at the time was six years. Thus, if the figure was not underestimated, the difference may have been accounted for by the presence of pupils below 7 and those above 14 years of age.

Bearing in mind that the area covered by the Diocese is one of the most densely populated areas in Nigeria, and that it was an area of intense rivalry between the Catholics and the Protestants, the figures would suggest that other factors of school mapping being equal, the Diocese would seem to have had a greater number of primary schools than it actually needed. Some of the schools could have been merged into bigger ones, possibly reducing their running costs. But as the main obstacle to such a proposal would have been the inter-denominational and village rivalries, both factors could on that account, be held responsible for the existence of more schools than would appear to be actually needed.

The suggestion that in 1965, the Diocese would seem to have had more primary schools than it actually needed, is strengthened by the fact that in May, 1975, and under the State system, the number had been reduced from 1,323 to 505 with an enrolment of 330,538 pupils.<sup>48</sup> This was done by merging two or more nearby schools under one administrative head. Again, while the average enrolment per school in 1965 was about 200, and the teacher/pupil ratio 1:36, in 1975, they were 655, and 1:40 respectively. At the later date, the schools were clearly less in number, larger in size and more economical to run in terms of teacher/pupil ratio. All these together would suggest that under the partnership arrangement, there seemed to have been more schools than were really needed. One of the direct effects of this was that many of them were "half-filled". The rivalry among the Missionary Societies was partly responsible for this.

The existence of such schools was one of the main topics discussed at the Nsukka Seminar in the paper presented by the Chief Inspector of Education, Mr. N.O. Ejiogu. In it, he showed that the presence of many different religious denominations "and the village rivalries associated with them had produced an uneconomic distribution of schools in certain areas". The Chief Inspector revealed that a survey conducted by his Ministry had shown that it was very common "to find three or four schools in a village, each representing a different denomination, and each considerably under-enrolled". He further pointed out that in all such cases, "the Government and the local communities were paying for three or more schools, when two or one would have served the needs of the area". In the final analysis,

<sup>48</sup>East Central State School Board, Monthly Bulletin, Vol.V, July, 1975. pp.28-9.

according to the Chief Inspector, the Region was wasting a lot of money and resources paying "for three half empty schools where one full one would suffice".<sup>49</sup>

In its own comments on what it described as "Uneconomic School Units" in Eastern Nigeria, the Ikoku Conference Report said that from its findings, the problem was caused by "inter-village rivalries exploited and encouraged by inter-denominational scramble for schools with religious expansion as the background motive".<sup>50</sup>

The actual existence of such uneconomic schools particularly, at the primary level, is further illustrated by the survey conducted by the Ministry of Education in 1962 discussed earlier. The survey showed that 580 or approximately 10 per cent of the primary schools in the Region were unviable.<sup>51</sup> In other words, that number were underenrolled which meant that each of them had a population of less than 60 pupils, and was within three miles radius of other better established primary schools. The Ministry repeated a similar survey in 1964 and this time, another 64 uneconomic schools were discovered and ordered to close down.<sup>52</sup>

It is also relevant to point out that the Missionary Societies did not dispute the fact that under the partnership arrangement, there was duplication of educational facilities. This point is substantiated by the text of the EEAC Memorandum to the Regional Government on the establishment of the School Boards discussed in the last chapter. It will be recalled that in it, the Protestant Missions said inter alia:

"... We sympathize with the wastefulness of the present system with its many half-filled schools and its inefficiency when classes are combined under one teacher because the children are divided between too many nearby schools".<sup>53</sup>

<sup>49</sup>Ejiogu, N.O., "The State and Education", A Paper Presented at the Nsukka Seminar, Appendix A, p.8.

<sup>50</sup>The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.1.

<sup>51</sup>Annual Report, 1962, p.12.

<sup>52</sup>Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, Official Document No. 2 of 1970. op. cit. Table 2.3, p.8.

<sup>53</sup>CMS Education Office, Owerri Diocese: The EEAC Memorandum on Education in Eastern Nigeria, August, 1965, op. cit.

On the basis of the evidence under this heading, one might conclude that as the partnership arrangement operated in Eastern Nigeria, it tended to encourage the establishment of more schools than were actually needed. Such evidence as that given by the Ikoku Conference Report that there were "schools some of whose enrolments are as low as six in a class"; and "of a class of thirteen taught by two teachers";<sup>54</sup> would all go to substantiate the criticism.

But on the other hand, the above conclusion does not take all the factors of school location into consideration. It looks at the problem from the point of view that small schools are uneconomic to maintain. Quite often, factors such as population distribution, accessibility to schools and the like make small schools in certain areas unavoidable. The Government survey of 1962 took such cases into consideration. Some schools with an enrolment of less than 60 were allowed to continue if there was no other nearby school. But the ones declared uneconomic were the cases of villages with more denominational schools than the enrolment and population would justify and where there was no problem of communication for the pupils. It is on such cases that the conclusion of duplication is based. It is also true that some people favour the existence of small schools. They argue that they make for greater efficiency through individual attention to pupils, etc. But in view of the difficulties in financing the schools in Eastern Nigeria at this time, the existence of such schools for that purpose, was considered detrimental to the economy which was not yet in a position to support them.

The establishment of schools in excess of need was brought about by the inter-denominational and village rivalries. By the very nature of the missionary objective for education, this particular charge could be said to be inherent in the partnership arrangement as it was operated in Eastern

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<sup>54</sup>The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.2.

Nigeria. Because the Missionary Societies aimed at using their schools to win converts, it was to be expected that the establishment of schools could get out of hand if it was not properly under control. This was because the Missions would logically want to open more and more schools in order to win new converts, and to keep their old schools going in order to maintain effective hold on their old members.

On the other hand, the Education Law (see Chapter 5.5) gave adequate powers to the Minister of Education over the opening and closing of schools. The merging or closing of the 644 primary schools between 1962 and 64, shows that it was possible for the Minister to exercise that power, missionary and local community opposition notwithstanding. In that case, the Government could have reduced the number of schools according to the declared need, and within the means of the available resources without necessarily taking over the management and the control of the entire system.

Thus, although the partnership arrangement was partly responsible for the establishment of more schools than would appear to be actually needed, on the other hand, a part of the blame should be assigned to the Government. This was mainly for its failure to exercise more effective control over the opening and closing of schools inspite of the adequate powers it enjoyed under the Law to do this. It was not necessary to take over the schools in order to be able to exercise that power.

#### 9.6 Excess Cost of Education and Financial Irregularities in Voluntary Agency School Administration

There were two main charges under this heading. The first was that under the partnership arrangement, the cost of education to the Government and the people was more than necessary. In other words, the presence of the Missionary Societies in the management of schools led to higher expenditure on education than it would otherwise have been. The second was that there were cases of financial irregularities on the part of some

Voluntary Agency School Managers. These were in the form of false returns on the number and qualifications of teachers and on pupil enrolment in order to attract more grants.

(a) Excess Cost of Education

On the allegation of excess cost to the Government and the people, it will be recalled that in 1950, the Colonial Education Authority reported that:

"a grant-earning school with reasonable enrolment is also a 'profit earning school.' Were enrolment near the maximum for those assisted schools there would be very substantial funds left over for improvement in building and equipment".

On discovering this, the Colonial Authorities instructed the Provincial Education Officers to ensure that "the income of the schools is applied solely to the purpose of the school".<sup>55</sup> This was the first hint that some grant-aided schools were having surplus funds after their normal expenses.

The same allegation was repeated by the Minister of Education, Dr. S.E. Imoke during a debate in the Eastern House of Assembly on the 29th of September, 1964. He went on to say that as soon as this was brought to the knowledge of his Ministry, he sent a team of Accounting Officers to the Provinces and instructed them to audit the accounts of the schools more regularly to ensure "that grants and other incomes accruing to individual schools were strictly applied to the running of the schools".<sup>56</sup>

Before the actual take-over of the schools, the Government of the East Central State ordered an investigation into the finances of Voluntary Agency Schools for the period before the outbreak of the national crisis and the civil war. The investigation Report showed that many of the aided Voluntary Agency schools were having substantial fund surplus after normal expenses. This finding was illustrated with the examples of five secondary

<sup>55</sup> Annual Report 1949/50. p.42.

<sup>56</sup> Eastern House of Assembly: Parliamentary Debates 1964-65, op. cit. p.82.

schools owned by the four major Missionary Societies and of a fifth owned by a private individual in 1966. The income and expenditure for each of them in that year were as follows:

Table XXXVII The Income and Expenditure of some Secondary Schools in Eastern Nigeria, 1966.<sup>57</sup>

| Agency             | Income from Grants and Fees (£) | Total Expenditure (£) | Surplus (£)  |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| CMS                | 27,028:15: 9                    | 20,138:15: 9          | 6,890: 0: 0  |
| Methodist Mission  | 25,150: 3:10                    | 18,820: 3:10          | 6,330: 0: 0  |
| RCM                | 18,179: 3: 0                    | 13,913: 3: 0          | 5,266: 0: 0  |
| CSM                | 15,675:12: 8                    | 11,175:12: 8          | 4,500: 0: 0  |
| Private Individual | 9,555: 2: 0                     | 8,194: 6: 8           | 1,360:15: 4  |
| Totals             | 95,588:17: 3                    | 72,242: 1:11          | 24,346:15: 4 |

It was also stated that the Investigation studied the accounts of many more schools than the five given in the above table, and that the same trend applied to most of the well established aided secondary schools investigated. Based on its findings, the Report concluded that under the partnership arrangement, many of the aided secondary schools in Eastern Nigeria were operating on a "profit basis". It further observed that in 1966, there was a total of 139 aided secondary schools in the Region, and pointed out that at the average of approximately £4,870 surplus per school, based on the above table, the Region would have served a total of £676,930, in that year if the schools were being directly managed by the state.

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<sup>57</sup> The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System 2, op. cit. pp. 13-15; see also The Economy of the New Education Edict, op. cit. pp. 2-3; and The Merits of the Public Education Edict 1, op. cit. p.3.

On primary schools, the Investigation claimed that the fully enrolled ones among them also operated on a "profit basis". For instance, it pointed out that the average enrolment for the classes in those schools "was thirty-six to forty per class but the Assumed Local Contribution was deducted in respect of thirty per class". By that arrangement, where a school was fully enrolled and the ALC collected in full, there would be in each fee-paying class six to ten pupils whose grant and ALC incomes were not taken into account. The amount from those two sources went into the coffers of the proprietor. In addition, the grant-in-aid formula provided for £5 per approved class teacher for the running expenses of the schools.<sup>58</sup>

It was the view of the Investigation Report that the Missionary Agencies which ran into debts in respect of their primary schools, did so because of their other unviable schools some of which might be unknown to the Government. Most of such schools, according to the Report, had their classes only "half-filled" and were kept going for "denominational and village prestige". In all such cases, the debts were as a result of the failure of the schools to attain the hypothetical number per class on which grants and ALC were calculated. The schools could also run into debts if the ALC or fees could not be raised in full although the schools were fully enrolled.

Based on the figures quoted by the East Central State Government Investigation Report, the charge of profit making by some of the schools can be said to have been substantiated. On the other hand, it cannot be held against the Voluntary Agencies or the partnership arrangement itself. This is because it was the Government that determined the formula by which the grants-in-aid were calculated. It also fixed the fees or the ALC to be paid, and had powers to prosecute any proprietor found to be charging

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<sup>58</sup>The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System. op. cit.p.16.

more than the fixed rates. If under these circumstances the schools made profits, the reason might be that the grant-in-aid system was too generous and/or that the proprietor concerned were very prudent in their financial management.

There is also the question of what actually happened to the surplus funds earned by the schools. At the interviews, the Church leaders maintained that any excess funds at the end of the year were used for the general improvement of the school concerned - erecting new buildings and buying new equipment. In some other cases, such money was used for the establishment of new secondary schools in particular. On the other hand, the opponents of the partnership arrangement alleged that the money was used by the Missions to erect impressive Church buildings aimed at attracting more members to the denomination concerned.<sup>59</sup> The Ministry of Education Report did not say what actually happened to the surplus funds. This was a serious omission.

If all such excess funds were expended as the Church leaders claimed, one could say that the funds had been properly used. But if they went into erecting new Church buildings, then, there would be the question of whether it is right for public funds to be used in subsidizing the religious activities of individual denominations. Taking the view of those who maintain that this should not be done, the partnership arrangement could then be blamed for making it possible for public funds to be used in furthering the cause of individual religious organisations. But even in this case, more of the blame should go to the Government whose grant-in-aid system made the surplus funds possible. Thus, in either way, this particular charge cannot strictly be held against the partnership arrangement per se.

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<sup>59</sup>Ukeje, B.O., "Organisation, Administration and Control of Education" in the Nsukka Seminar Report. Appendix G. p.4.



(b) Financial Irregularities in Voluntary Agency School Administration

Under the partnership system, there were many complaints and investigation reports on financial irregularities by some Voluntary Agency School Managers. For reasons of space, only some representative examples are used to illustrate their general nature.

A typical case was one affecting an expatriate Catholic Parish School Managers at Ezza Imoha in Abakaliki Province. It was investigated and reported in 1962. There were similar other cases involving some of the other Missionary Societies. Our use of the Catholic example as an illustration does not therefore imply that the Mission was alone in this type of irregularity.

In 1962, the Ministry of Education received many complaints from different sources that an expatriate Catholic Parish School Manager was victimizing the pupils in schools under his management for non-payment of what was described as "illegal levies" on them. A team of the Ministry Officials was sent to investigate the complaints. The investigating team found among other things that:

(i) The Manager had in 1962, imposed levies ranging from 10s to £2 on the pupils in the schools under his management. Some of the children whose parents could not afford to pay the levies "were daily detained after school hours till late in the evening". As that did not elicit hundred per cent payment of the levies, some of the schools were closed on the orders of the Manager "from Tuesday, 23rd to Friday 26th October 1962 inclusive"; and others "from 7th to 23rd November 1962 inclusive. The temporary closure of the schools was nowhere recorded in the school Log Book".

(ii) On the allegation that the Manager was in the habit of falsifying enrolment records in order to attract grants for non-existent pupils, the Team investigated a total of 13 schools under his management. Its finding was that "there was irregularities in enough of the schools to warrant the conclusion that it is not merely the Headmasters who are culpable but

the management is fundamentally responsible".

For example, in one of the schools, St. Anda's RCM School, Umuoghara, the records showed a total pupil population of 345 but, in fact, only a total of 231 were actually enrolled. This meant in effect that the Regional Government was making grants, and the Local Government Council paying ALC to the Manager for 114 pupils that did not exist. As has already been explained earlier in this chapter, there was no direct payment of fees by individual primary school pupils in the whole of Abakaliki Province. The ALC share of education cost was raised through rates collected by the Local Government Councils and paid directly to the school managers. The investigating team visited St. Anda school every day for two weeks, while it was in session, to get the Manager to produce these other 114 pupils, but, he was unable to do so.<sup>60</sup>

The Investigating Team was still at its work when a group of 15 persons from among the community leaders - Councillors, Chiefs and the Elders of the Parish in which the Manager served, petitioned the Federal and the Regional Governments demanding the immediate removal of the Irish Priest from their midst. The petition was captioned "Rev. Manager Must Go". In it, the people threatened to hand over all Catholic schools in the Parish to the County Council if the Priest was not removed. They also demanded his immediate deportation from Nigeria. A verbatim part of the petition read as follows:

"... is a Rev. Father/Politician/Contrator. He interferes with native building funds; He forfeits local contributions for every first year scholar and none (non) Baptised (Baptized) children and that makes most of the scholars to stop schooling when their teachers ask them to pay it and the childrens' parents haven't no money to pay and that decreases the number of children in our town yearly"<sup>61</sup> etc .

The findings of the Investigation and the complaints that led to it were presented to the Regional Board of Education at its meeting held in

<sup>60</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: File No. IN.133D/6/536(RCM). pp. 4-5.

<sup>61</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: "Secret" File No. ES.102/71 p.2.

September, 1963. After debating the report, the Board resolved:

"That where the Minister feels, as a result of investigation, that gross fraud or offence has been committed, the Minister should suspend immediately the Manager and later refer the matter to the Board together with all documents and investigation reports including the alleged offender's defence to enable the Board to advise the Minister on removing the person from being a Manager or otherwise".<sup>62</sup>

In a letter dated 12th October, 1963, the Ministry of Education directed the Catholic Bishop in-charge of the Abakaliki Diocese, the Rt. Rev. McGettrick, who was the overall proprietor of all Catholic schools in the Diocese, to remove the Parish Manager concerned "to some other post". Part of the letter read as follows:

"... Various Officials from this Ministry who looked into the complaints found evidence of falsification of school records in so many of the schools under his management that he could hardly avoid some responsibility ... it is felt that it might be in the best interests of the schools and the Mission if he were now to be moved to some other post".<sup>63</sup>

Although the Bishop protested against the directive from the Ministry, in the end, he complied and removed the Parish Manager from that post.

Furthermore, it will be recalled that in 1964, the Minister of Education ordered an investigation into the cause of the delay in the payment of teachers' salaries. Widespread financial irregularities among most of the Voluntary Agency School Managers featured very prominently in its findings. Apart from the Church of Scotland Mission, all the other Missionary Societies were involved in one form or the other. The main findings against them were outlined under the following headings:

- (i) Diversion of educational funds into uses other than the authorized ones;
- (ii) The inclusion of "certain teachers as having concurrently taught at different schools";

<sup>62</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: File No. IN:133/557.

<sup>63</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: "Secret" File No. ES. 102/71, p.6.

(iii) Returning "several uncertificated teachers as certificated", and diverting the difference between their actual salary and the grants received on their behalf into some other use; and

(iv) The inclusion of the names of non-existent teachers for the purposes of attracting more grants for the schools concerned.

All the above financial malpractices were substantiated with specific instances, and with the names of the Managers and the Missions they represented. As we cannot recount all the individual cases one by one here, we shall use one typical one to illustrate the general nature of the rest. It was contained in a petition to the Minister of Education by the two American Peace Corps teachers in one of the Voluntary Agency Schools at Obizi, Owerri Province referred to earlier in this chapter. In it, the Peace Corps teachers complained among other things that:

"Since our arrival in January (1964), the management has not expended even the bare minimum of funds necessary to maintain the school although it receives full government grants-in-aid. Teachers' salaries are seldom met. Commitments to feed the students are frequently broken and seldom met causing frequent disruption in service".

The Peace Corps Volunteers were convinced from all that they had seen and observed that the government grant meant for the up-keep of the school was being diverted into some other use "as it is obviously not going toward improving the school situation".<sup>64</sup>

Cases similar to the above were reported from many of the Voluntary Agencies. The findings against each of them were listed below the name of the Missionary Society concerned. A compilation of the abuses was made and forwarded to the Eastern Nigerian Executive Council in 1964 together with a lengthy memorandum by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education. In it, he said inter alia:

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<sup>64</sup>Ministry of Education, Eastern Nigeria: 'Secret' File No. 102/71. pp.5-7.

"Prima facie cases of fraudulent acts, misappropriation, conversion and embezzlement have been established against certain Managers of schools".

One of the most serious offences was that:

"In some cases, teachers have been made to sign the official salary vouchers in advance for salaries not received".

They were often told to do this so that the vouchers could be forwarded to the Senior Assistant Inspector of Education before the 15th of the following month as was required by the official regulation. The Memorandum cited a number of proved cases in which the teachers were made to sign the vouchers "under duress". In others, they did so "in good faith". But once the vouchers were forwarded to the Provincial Education Office,

"they are used by the Managers as evidence that the teachers have in fact been paid. Teachers who dare to report such fraudulent actions by these Managers are either victimized or dismissed".

The Memorandum by the Permanent Secretary recommended among other measures that:

"It is considered that the specific cases of fraud, misappropriation, conversion or embezzlement should be treated seriously. Quite apart from the action likely to be taken by the Police, withdrawal of their recognition as Managers should be considered. The Police should also be pressed to take appropriate action".<sup>65</sup>

The speech made by the Minister of Education in the Eastern House of Assembly on the 29th September, 1964, which was referred to in Chapter 8.2. 3 was based on the Memorandum by the Permanent Secretary.

Other allegations of financial malpractices by some of the Missionary Societies were contained in a paper presented at the Nsukka Seminar of 1965 by Professor B.O. Ukeje. In it, he claimed that some of the Voluntary Agencies often resorted to "un-ethical practices" for the purpose of either "to save a bad financial situation or to raise enough funds for putting up attractive and massive Church buildings to attract more members".

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<sup>65</sup> ibid., pp. 8-14.

The Paper went on to say that in some cases, the Government was made to pay grants for the salaries of "non-existent teachers in non-existent schools". In others, the Government paid grants for the salaries "of teachers who had long died". In yet other cases, "one teacher may have his name in several schools simultaneously and salaries paid against these names". Such teachers, according to the Paper, received only one of such salaries paid in their names and were forced to keep quiet for fear of victimization by the Agencies which employed them.

Professor Ukeje's Paper concluded by saying that:

"As a consequence of these malpractices the Government of the Region has been spending unnecessarily high percentage of its annual revenue on education, or shall we say on things other than education".<sup>66</sup>

Based on such evidence as was adduced to substantiate this charge, there is no doubt that under the partnership arrangement, there were serious and proven cases of fraud, misappropriation of funds, conversion and embezzlement by some of the school managers. But on the other hand, the blame for their existence cannot be placed entirely at the door of the system as it was operated in Eastern Nigeria. After all, similar financial mal-practices existed in other sectors of the public service as they did in the management of education. While we do not condone them, the point here is that they were not entirely brought about by the partnership arrangement. Such mal-practices were part of the society at the time. They could have been eradicated when, and if, there was a general change of heart by the society as a whole without necessarily having to nationalize the schools.

In addition, the system of educational financing could have been reformed to ensure stricter checks against possible fraudulent practices. There is also the question as to whether the government inspection machinery was adequate to act as an effective watch-dog against such abuses. During

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<sup>66</sup>Ukeje, B.O. "Organisation, Administration and Control of Education in Eastern Nigeria". A Paper presented at The Nsukka Seminar, Appendix G., op. cit., p.4.

the period of the partnership arrangement, it was often reported that the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education was inadequately staffed. There was also the complaint that the available staff spent a great deal of their time on routine administration and that for this reason, they were unable to give sufficient attention to pure inspection duties. The Dike Commission Report criticized the situation and suggested that:

"Their main duty must remain the straightforward inspection of schools, regularly, systematically and thoroughly, to ensure the maintenance of proper standards. Nothing supersedes this in importance".<sup>67</sup>

The shortage of inspecting Officers was known to have continued till about the outbreak of the national crisis. For instance, in 1964, the Region had a total of 67 field inspectors of all grades<sup>68</sup> for its 5,986 primary, and 245 secondary schools and 103 teacher training colleges.<sup>69</sup> This was an average ratio of one inspecting officer to approximately 95 institutions. For that number of officers to combine their professional duties with routine administration would have made it difficult for the schools to be regularly and adequately inspected. For this reason, the financial mal-practices can again be blamed on the Government for its failure to provide adequate inspection facilities to detect and to check them. The great number of such practices uncovered in 1964 would suggest that there had been some act of negligence on the part of the Government.

#### 9.7 The High Cost of Maintaining the Voluntary Agency Separate Inspectorates and the Payment of their School Managers' Salaries and Expenses.

It will be recalled that with effect from 1927, the Colonial Government empowered each of the Missionary Societies to establish its own inspectorate

<sup>67</sup> The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p.38.

<sup>68</sup> Wheeler, A.C.R., The Organisation of Educational Planning in Nigeria.  
Unesco: International Institute for Educational Planning, Paris, 1968, p.51.

<sup>69</sup> Statistical Digest 1966 Eastern Nigeria, op. cit. p.13.

to supplement the work of that of the Education Department. That meant the existence of dual inspectorates operated concurrently by Government and the Voluntary Agencies. But when the nationalists came to power, they criticized this as being wasteful. In 1963 therefore, the Regional Government abolished the Voluntary Agency inspectorates arguing that:

"The present system of dual inspectorates operated concurrently by Government and Voluntary Agencies has been found to be wasteful".<sup>70</sup>

On the payment of the Voluntary Agency school Managers' and Supervisors' administrative expenses, the grants-in-aid regulations provided that:

(a) "A grant may be paid to an educational agency in aid of administrative and supervisory expenses where, in the opinion of the Minister the number of schools and the volume of work in connection therewith, justify the payment of the grant".

(b) "The grant shall be the amount of the expenditure approved by the Minister on administration and supervision duties. But, in the case of expatriate staff employed in administrative and supervisory duties, the grant-in-aid shall be assessed upon their qualifications...".<sup>71</sup>

The Missionary system of School Administration in the Region, 1965-66 is attached as Appendix 8 .

The Regional Government continued to make grants to the Voluntary Agencies for their administrative and supervisory expenses until the schools were closed down in 1967 following the outbreak of the civil war. But at the end of it and after the schools had been taken over by the State, the East Central State Government published a pamphlet in which the dual inspectorates and the "high public expenditure" on Voluntary Agency school administration were given as part of the reasons for taking over the schools.

The pamphlet argued that one of the advantages of the new system was that it would save the huge amount of public funds "paid out as personal emoluments

<sup>70</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Policy for Education 1963. op. cit. p.3.

<sup>71</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Education Law 1956, The Grants-in-Aid Regulations. 1962. Government Printer, Enugu. 1962. p.4.



to Education Secretaries and Supervisors, and the Administrative expenses of their offices". The amount to be saved was illustrated with the case of 1966. In that year according to the pamphlet, the Regional Government spent a total of £41,625 "to pay the personal emoluments to these Secretaries and Supervisors, and for the upkeep of their offices".<sup>72</sup> The argument was that the new system would eliminate this source of drain on public funds.

It is true that each of the Voluntary Agencies had its own inspectorate in addition to that of the Ministry of Education, and that the Government made grants to them for the salaries and other administrative expenses of their school managers and supervisors. But since the inspectorates had long been abolished, it seems illogical to include their cost to the Government as part of the reasons for the State take-over of the schools. This is more so when it is recalled that at the time the inspectorates were abolished, none of the agencies protested against it or asked for their re-instatement. Secondly, as they no longer existed, the inspectorates could not have had any effect on the post-civil war public expenditure on education. What was more, the sum of £41,625 was not too much as the administrative expenses of the Secretaries and Supervisors.

On the other hand, the existence of the Voluntary Agency school managers and supervisors was inherent in the partnership arrangement. The State take-over would no doubt reduce the number of management units and personnel and possibly the administrative cost. For example, as was shown earlier in this Chapter, (9.2, see also Appendix 8 ), the CMS alone had 29 administrative units for its Owerri Diocese in 1966 for its primary schools there. The other Missionary Societies may have had twice or more than that number at the same time. Each of them was headed by a manager of one grade or the other. But in 1975, all the primary schools in the same area

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<sup>72</sup>East Central State: The Economy of the New Public Education System. op. cit., p.2.

were being managed by six Divisional School Boards with a total membership of 24 and six secretaries as their executive heads. There were no assistant secretaries. Administratively therefore, it is likely to cost less to manage the schools under the state system. What is not certain is whether the management will be more or less efficient. This will take some time to determine.

Still on the Voluntary Agency school managers and supervisors, it is difficult to see how the Government could have stopped expending public funds on their salaries and administrative expenses while the Missionary Societies continued to manage part of the public school system. Although such expenditure can hardly be considered a major reason for nationalizing the schools, this seems to be one effective way of solving the problem. There must, however, be other major reasons why a Government would want to take over the school system. The public expenditure on the Voluntary Agency administrative personnel does not seem to be one of them.

#### 9.8 Denial of Active Local Participation in the Management of Schools

This criticism applied differently to primary and to secondary schools. In the case of the former and as was shown in Chapter Four, the Protestant Missions appointed Local Committees for all their primary schools. Their members were drawn from both the Christians and the non-Christians in the communities concerned.

In the case of the RCM, its Church Committees, where necessary, occasionally looked into some aspects of their primary schools. They did this particularly, in the area of raising local financial support for the schools. In other words, while the Protestant Missions extended participation to all sections of the local community, the RCM on the other hand, confined it only to members of the Church and on financial matters in particular. The criticism therefore applied more to the Roman Catholic Mission, than the Protestant Missions.

At the secondary school level, the Grant-in-Aid Regulations of 1962,

and the ones previous to that, provided for the establishment of a Board of Governors for every secondary school in the Region. In all the Boards, the local community was represented by two members.<sup>73</sup> No evidence was found that the Regulation was infringed by any of the Missionary Societies. In principle therefore, it is not correct to say that under the partnership arrangement, the local people were denied participation in the management of the secondary schools in their midst.

But in practice, it may be argued that by the nature of the constitution of the Boards, all the local community representatives were nominated by the Proprietors, and not by the people themselves. For more effective representation, the people should have been given the right to choose their representatives on the Boards. The failure to have made it so, cannot be attributed to the partnership arrangement. Instead, it was the fault or an oversight on the part of the authority which made the Regulation concerning the membership of the Boards of Governors. The lack of adequate local participation to the extent it was substantiated, was not inherent in the system. It could have been corrected without nationalizing the schools.

#### 9.9 Obstruction of Co-ordinated Planning and Control by the Partnership System of Educational Management

The main criticism here was that the division of the school system into too many management units made co-ordinated planning more difficult and the machinery for control and management rather over-decentralised.

From the administrative set-ups in the various Missions (see Chapters 4.2 and 9.2), one would say that the partnership arrangement made for too many semi-autonomous administrative units within the school system. The RCM alone had as many as 152 such units throughout the Region. In addition, the individual Voluntary Agencies had no central control unit for their secondary schools. Each of them was virtually autonomous. The only links

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<sup>73</sup> Eastern Nigeria: Grants-in-Aid Regulations 1962, op. cit. p. 5.

between one and the other were the Education Laws and Regulations of the Region.

It was in recognition of the above weakness in the system that the Dike Commission Report said inter alia:

"In the Eastern Region today, a highly centralised administrative service, under the direct control of the Ministry of Education, exists side by side with a complex system of private Voluntary Agency controls. This situation reflects the organic growth of education provision in the Region, but, although the partnership between Government and the Voluntary Agencies in the educational field will continue, the present situation cannot be regarded as likely to satisfy indefinitely the growing needs of a modern state".<sup>74</sup>

After discussing the difficulties which the existing system of management and control was posing to education in general, and praising the pioneering efforts of the Missionary Societies in the field, the Report declared:

"But an historical series of events does not relieve the State of the responsibility to concern itself directly with education, and to ensure that all children, regardless of religious or social background, shall have equal opportunities for an education related to their aptitudes and abilities".<sup>75</sup>

As a solution to the administrative complexities of the partnership arrangement, the Commission recommended among other things:

"That consideration should be given to the organisation of education on a provincial basis under the executive direction of the Provincial Education Officers, and to the establishment of Provincial Education Committees, as a stage towards further devolution".<sup>76</sup>

Commenting on the same problem, the Ikoku Conference Report lamented over what it described as "Lack of Co-ordinated Planning", and declared:

"It is to be regretted that although, of course, there has been planning, careful planning, within the agencies over the last two or three decades, there has been a culpable lack of co-ordinated planning. Government has been content to demand the minimum requirements for efficiency while giving the agencies a blank cheque for educational expansion".<sup>77</sup>

<sup>74</sup>The Dike Commission Report, op. cit. p.33.

<sup>75</sup>ibid., p.34.

<sup>76</sup>ibid., p.83.

<sup>77</sup>The Ikoku Conference Report, op. cit. p.2.

The Conference solution to the problem was the re-organisation of the entire school system on the basis of the communities served, and not on Church agency. In doing this adequate safeguards should be provided "for religious freedom for all school children. The community served should be represented by their own nominees on the management committee of their amalgamated schools".<sup>78</sup>

It will be recalled that all through the period from 1956 to 1965, the RCM was consistently opposed to most of the Government proposals aimed at greater state participation in education. This attitude was illustrated by the controversies over the UPE scheme of 1957; the position of the Mission at both the Dike Commission 1958 and the Ikoku Conference 1962 (see Chapter 7.4 and 8.1.4 respectively); and the series of major disagreement between the Missions and the Government from 1960 through to 1965 discussed also in Chapter Eight.

The strong opposition of the RCM in particular to the educational policies of the Government, and the division of the Voluntary Agency school system into too many administrative units both combined to make co-ordinated planning and control much more difficult. The latter, for instance, made for multiple employers of teachers under the partnership arrangement and this in turn made the deployment of resources more complicated. It impaired mobility and transferability so that the most efficient use could not be made of all available resources in the school system as a whole.

It was in recognition of the need for more efficient deployment of resources that both Dike and Ikoku made the essential recommendation that the planning of educational provision should be on geographical basis or "on the basis of the communities served". It was only by doing this that functions could be decentralized from the headquarters down to provincial or divisional school boards. The problem at the time was that much of the

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<sup>78</sup>ibid., p.3.

decision-making powers or administrative responsibilities were concentrated either at the Ministry, or the individual Voluntary Agency headquarters, and the local authorities or officers had very little powers of their own. The organisation of school administration on Church basis made it difficult for educational programmes to be co-ordinated at the local level.

Another obstacle in the way of implementing official programmes uniformly throughout the system was the divergence in the educational objectives of the Missions and the Government. While the former were more concerned with the school as a medium of evangelization, the latter's principal objectives were to use the schools for purposes of social and political development and for more efficient and economic deployment of the available resources. Unless there is a consensus of objectives among all the major agencies concerned, it will be difficult to evolve a common plan and to implement it successfully throughout the system. Because such a plan may be based on the objectives of the Government, the Missions may refuse to co-operate in its implementation in their schools. In such a situation, conflict is bound to arise from the attempt by either of the two sides to achieve its own separate set of objectives.

That was exactly what happened when the Regional Government attempted to stop further expansion of the Voluntary Agency primary school system by confining the responsibility for future expansion in the hands of the Local Government Councils starting from the launching of the UPE scheme in 1957. Because the Missions were not as much concerned with the economic deployment of resources as the Government, they, particularly the RCM, opposed even schemes aimed at rationalizing the facilities for primary education "even where these were wastefully duplicated by various voluntary agencies, on grounds that it might result in some Catholic children not having easy access to Catholic schools".<sup>79</sup> This was the main cause of the

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<sup>79</sup>Wheeler, A.C.R., op. cit., p.42.

majority of the disagreements between the Mission and the Government. That kind of situation made the successful implementation of many Government proposals difficult as was illustrated by the case of the 1957 UPE scheme.

There was also the point that the partnership arrangement was not one of 'power-sharing' between the Government and the Missions. Instead, it was one of 'function-sharing' between the two. While the former was responsible for educational laws and regulations, partial financing and planning of specific programmes such as the UPE scheme, the latter performed the function of the actual management of the schools - transfer, dismissal and payment of teachers' salaries, admission of pupils and students and the like.

On the part of the Government, all decision-making powers were concentrated at the Ministry of Education headquarters at Enugu. The provincial officers performed the function of seeing to it that the schools adhered to the official regulations. The officers had no powers of initiative in the light of local needs and circumstances. It was this arrangement that the Dike Commission Report referred to as the "highly centralised administrative service, under the direct control of the Ministry of Education . . .".

The chain of command in the missionary system of school administration, on the other hand, was made up of the Diocesan Education Board whose executive head was the Education Secretary, the Archdeaconry Education Committee headed by a supervisor, and a Parish School Committee presided over by a Parish Manager in that descending order. In addition, the Protestant Missions had a Local School Committee for each of their primary schools. This did not exist in the Catholic system. All the Dioceses operated independent of each other in educational matters. There was no central administrative organisation even within the same Mission. At the secondary level, every school had its own separate administrative body - the Board of Governors

with the Principal of the school as its executive head and secretary.<sup>80</sup>

It was this existence of too many autonomous administrative units in the Missionary school system that the Deputy Director of Education, Eastern Nigeria, Mr. C.T. Quinn-Young earlier complained against in 1949. He criticized the practice whereby local managers were made solely responsible for the administration of large numbers of schools with no central or co-ordinated system of management and control even within the same mission (see Chapter 4.4). It was this too that the Dike Commission Report described as the 'complex system of private Voluntary Agency controls', (see Appendix 8).

The highly centralized nature of the policy decision-making powers in the Ministry headquarters, and the existence of many independent administrative units within the missions were two incompatible features that could hardly work together for effective co-ordination of educational programmes. This, in addition to the missionary opposition to official policies and the difference in the educational objectives of the Missions and the Government, all combined to make co-ordinated planning, management and control much more difficult under the partnership arrangement.

Of the three main sources of obstruction, only the difference in objectives which was responsible for the missionary opposition to official policies could be said to be inherent in the partnership system, and could hardly be eliminated without excluding the missions from the management of schools. The organisation of the voluntary agency school administration was incidental, and as the Dike Commission pointed out, it was a reflection of "the organic growth of education provision in the Region". It could have been eliminated without necessarily having to nationalise the schools. For instance, the Missions could have been made to come together to organize the management of their schools on provincial basis as was recommended by the Ikoku Conference Report. The supervisory machinery of the Ministry of

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<sup>80</sup>See Wheeler, A.C.R., op. cit., pp. 48-9.



Education could also have been reorganised on the same basis, and both given some powers for local initiative or discretion.

### Summary

Of the nine main charges against the partnership arrangement as it operated in Eastern Nigeria, this chapter has endeavoured to show that not all of them could rightly be blamed on the system per se. Among such ones were those in relation to the employment of too many expatriate staff by the Missionary Societies, financial irregularities in Voluntary Agency school administration, denial of active local participation in school management. The charges in these areas were incidental to the partnership system and not necessarily inherent in it. They could, therefore, have been eliminated without nationalizing the school system.

On the other hand, the criticisms as the partnership arrangement affected the teachers; divisiveness among the local population; difficulty in co-ordinated planning and control and partly, duplication of educational facilities; and on the part of the RCM only, denial of adequate participation by local communities, could be said to be inherent in the system under the peculiar circumstances in which it operated in Eastern Nigeria. It would have been difficult to eliminate these groups of weaknesses without some major changes in the structure of educational management and control as it existed under the partnership arrangement.

We should also note that the problems of duplication of facilities, divisiveness among the local communities and co-ordinated planning and control were partly created by the cultural and political factors within the society itself. The partnership arrangement was not, therefore, entirely responsible for the problems in those three areas. The people's general way of life and social and economic circumstances discussed earlier in Chapter Two, contributed significantly to aggravate the problems associated with those aspects of the school system. For instance, their spirit of rivalry and

competition was partly responsible for the establishment of more schools than were actually needed.

One of the main objectives of the new state system of management and control is the elimination of the major weaknesses of the partnership arrangement discussed in this chapter.<sup>81</sup> We shall, therefore, return to this topic in the next chapter which discusses the actual State take-over of the school system and its operation ever since.

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<sup>81</sup>See Ministry of Information and Home Affairs: The Merits of the East Central State Public Education System, op. cit. pp. 1-20; South-Eastern State of Nigeria (the present Cross-River State), Education Edict No. 5 of 1975, Government Printer, Calabar, pp. 17-45; and Rivers State: Education (Proprietorship and Management of Schools) Edict No. 14 of 1971, Government Printer, Port Harcourt, pp. 5-15.

## CHAPTER TEN

### THE NATIONAL CRISIS, EDUCATION AND THE STATE TAKE-OVER OF THE SCHOOLS, 1966 - 1975

#### Introduction

It may be necessary to outline the political state of affairs and the school system in general at the time information for this chapter was gathered in 1975. This will help to explain some of the constraints which inevitably hampered accessibility to some desired information, particularly in relation to the response to the questionnaires administered to heads of primary and secondary schools.

The Nigerian civil war was fought mainly in the three Eastern States. At the end of it in 1970, a state of emergency was declared throughout the States. This was still in force at the time the field work for this chapter was carried out. The presence of soldiers in many parts of the States, and the general political atmosphere of uncertainty created such tension and suspicion that most people were very cautious in discussing or agreeing to discuss anything topic related to the recent events including the state take-over of the schools which followed immediately after the civil war. On the later aspect however, the Government Officials were more co-operative than the Church leaders, their former school managers, teachers and private individuals.

Secondly, the already tense atmosphere was made worse by another Military Coup d'etat in July, 1975. It came four weeks after the author had arrived in Nigeria to carry out the field work for this thesis. At this point, some of the people who had earlier agreed to be interviewed cancelled the appointments and would not agree to discuss the topic at a future date. They were afraid that another civil war might be around the corner and would not be drawn to discuss any topic related to the actions of the military for fear of being quoted.

Important also was the fact that at the end of the civil war in 1970, many of the educational institutions in the States were either considerably damaged or their equipment looted. For example, a survey conducted by the East Central State Ministry of Education in March, 1970 showed that:

"(i) Some 2,102 primary and 151 post-primary institutions had little or no damage; 836 primary and 87 post-primary institutions had considerable damage but could still function while 348 primary and fifty-three post-primary institutions had very severe damage.

(ii) On equipment, 296 primary and twenty-one post-primary institutions had little or no damage, 1,274 primary and fifty-five post-primary institutions had considerable damage while 1,598 primary and 215 post-institutions' suffered considerable damage."<sup>2</sup>

In the former South-Eastern (now Cross River) State, the story was similar. Of its 1,584 primary schools, 420 were either severely damaged or completely destroyed during the civil war.<sup>3</sup> In the case of its 54 secondary schools "some of the buildings and classroom equipment had been either destroyed or looted".

Schools in the Rivers State suffered the same fate as those in the other two States. In 1970 for example, only 409 of its 507 primary and 21 of its 28 secondary schools could manage to re-open. The rest had been completely destroyed. At the same time, it was reported that the schools which were functioning, suffered from acute shortage of classroom and living accommodation and lack of sufficient furniture and equipment.<sup>5</sup> During the field work, many of the schools in the three States were still being reconstructed and re-equipped.

<sup>1</sup>Post-primary institutions in the above survey included secondary schools, teacher-training colleges and technical institutes. Of the number of post-primary institutions quoted in the survey, 251 of them were secondary schools. See Ministry of Education, Enugu: Directory of Post-Primary Institutions in East Central State of Nigeria. Official Document No. 6. of 1971, Government Printer, Enugu, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup>East Central State of Nigeria: Three Years after the Civil War, Official Document No. 6 of 1974, p. 96.

<sup>3</sup>South-Eastern State of Nigeria: First State Development Plan 1970-74 Progress Report, Government Printer, Calabar, p. 11.

<sup>4</sup>South-Eastern State of Nigeria: Educational Progress Report 1968-73. Government Printer, Calabar, p.7.

<sup>5</sup>Rivers State of Nigeria: Annual Report 1972. Government Printer, Port Harcourt, 1974, pp. 1 and 7.

All the three States also suffered from lack of qualified teachers at both primary and secondary levels. There were four main reasons for this: one, during the three years of the civil war, 1967-70, no graduate and certificated teachers were produced because all the educational institutions were closed down soon after the outbreak of the civil war. Two, many of the old teachers died during the fighting through one cause or another. Three, all the expatriate teachers left the East when the war started and were not allowed to return at the end of it. Four, soon after the end of the crisis, many qualified teachers from these States were "attracted away to more prosperous neighbouring States which offer more attractive conditions of service such as car loans, basic allowances, free quarters and other fringe benefits".<sup>6</sup>

Under the circumstances as outlined above, some desired information could not be obtained because either the records had been destroyed or the people concerned were afraid to be quoted. Secondly, the aftermath of the ravages of the civil war on the schools would not permit any real evaluation of the new system so soon after it was introduced. The assessment attempted in this chapter should, therefore, be seen through the spectacle of the then prevailing general atmosphere in the States.

The chapter itself is presented under six sub-headings made up of as follows:

- I. The National Crisis and Education, 1966 - 70;
- II. The State Take-Over of the Schools and the Education Edicts;
- III. The Ministry of Education and the School Boards under the State System;
- IV. Missionary Reaction to the Education Edicts
- V. Public Reaction to the State Take-Over of Schools; and
- VI. The State School System in Practice, 1970-75.

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<sup>6</sup>Ministry of Education, Enugu: Official News Text No. 57 HP/OT.001/57. Thursday, May 3, 1971, p.4.

### 10.1 The National Crisis and Education, 1966-70

The elected governments of Nigeria were toppled by a military coup d'etat in the early hours of 15th January, 1966. The following day, it was announced from Lagos that:

"The Cabinet had decided to hand over to the Armed Forces the Government of the Federation in view of the situation that had arisen".<sup>7</sup>

Soon after the military take-over the head of the Army, Major-General J.T.U. Aguiyi Ironsi made a broadcast to the nation. In it, he stated that "the offices of President, Prime Minister, Regional Governors and Premiers were suspended together with the Ministers and the membership and powers of all the Legislatures". In addition, all the political parties were banned and declared illegal together with the tribal organisations and unions. Four new Military Governments under Military Governors were established in the Regions. The one for the East was Lt. Colonel Odumegwu Ojukwu.<sup>8</sup>

With the over-throw of the Government and the suspension of the Constitution, no further action was taken to implement the Eastern Nigeria Education (School Board) Law 1965. The partnership arrangement between Church and State in education was left to continue as before until July, 1967, when the schools were closed following the outbreak of the civil war.

In relation to education during the sixteen-month period, (January 1966 to July, 1967), there was only one development worthy of mention. In April, 1967, the Military Governor of Eastern Nigeria, Lt. Colonel Adumegwu Ojukwu announced in a budget speech that with effect from January 1968, the payment of fees was to be reintroduced in all the primary school classes throughout the Region. The annual rates were to be as follows:<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Niven, (Sir) Rex, The War of Nigerian Unity. op. cit. p. 81.

<sup>8</sup> ibid., pp. 81-2; and for full account of the military take-over of government, see pp. 77-84.

<sup>9</sup> Ojukwu, C.O., Biafra: Selected Speeches with Journal of Events. Perennial Library, Harper and Row Publishers, New York, 1969, pp. 136-7.

| Elementary | Rate per annum (£) |
|------------|--------------------|
| I          | 1                  |
| II         | 2                  |
| III        | 3                  |
| IV         | 4                  |
| V          | 5                  |
| VI         | 6                  |

As the schools had to be closed three months later when the civil war started, the proposal was never implemented.

To return to the events of the national crisis, in July 1966, there was a counter coup d'etat which was followed by series of uprisings in which many people from parts of Eastern Nigeria in particular, lost their lives. The events of July 1966 were succeeded by a series of other crises and abortive peace meetings by the leaders up to early in 1967. As no settlement seemed possible after many months of continued attempts, the military authorities in the East and the one in Lagos took measures and counter measures all of which were not related to education and which culminated in the division of the country into twelve states in May, 1967 by the Federal Military Government. Under the new political structure, three states were carved out of the former Eastern Region. They were the East Central, South-Eastern and the Rivers States.

The Military Government of the East rejected the state exercise and seceded from the Federation on the 30th of May, 1967. The reasons for this are too long and complicated to be gone into here. A week later, 6th July, the civil war started. It was aimed at bringing back the East into the Federation. Two weeks after the civil war was declared, all educational institutions in the three Eastern States were closed down.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>For full account of the series of events, see Niven, R., The War of Nigerian Unity, op. cit. pp. 85-123; the whole of Forsyth, F., The Biafran Story, Penguin Books Ltd., Middlesex, England, 1969; and Ojukwu, C.O. Biafra: Selected Speeches with Journal of Events, op. cit.

In the case of the former East Central State, "there was a complete halt in all educational activities"<sup>11</sup> during the period of the civil war, July, 1967 to January 1970. Its primary and secondary schools were reopened on 16th and 19th March, 1970 respectively.<sup>12</sup>

In the South-Eastern State and while the civil war was still on, the Federal Government reopened some schools in areas occupied by its forces. The first batch were reopened in April, 1968. But the majority of the schools remained closed till the end of the civil war. A year after the first number of schools were reopened, the South-Eastern State Government integrated the Local Government primary schools with those directly owned and managed by the former Regional Government and handed over their management to the new State Ministry of Education.

In 1969 too, six Local School Boards were created to take over the management of Voluntary Agency primary schools.<sup>13</sup> In the same year "the State School Board was set up to take over the control and management of Voluntary Agency secondary schools". It was however pointed out that this measure "did not remove the proprietorship of the schools from the Voluntary Agencies". What was done at the time was for the Government to take over "matters relating to personnel and financial management of such schools".<sup>14</sup>

All schools in the Rivers State remained closed till late in 1968. It was about then that a few of them "re-opened around places that were liberated". By June, 1969, a total of 361 of its 507 primary, and 18 of its 28 secondary schools had reopened. The ones that reopened "had no seats, text-books, doors, equipment and were due to operate with fear as the liberation efforts were still not distant". It was not until a year after

<sup>11</sup> East Central State of Nigeria: Three Years After the Civil War, op. cit. p. 94.

<sup>12</sup> ibid., p. 144.

<sup>13</sup> South-Eastern State of Nigeria: Educational Progress Report 1968-73, op. cit. p.1.

<sup>14</sup> ibid., p.7.



the end of the civil war (1971) that all the schools in the State were able to reopen.<sup>15</sup>

Thus, most of the period 1966-70 was one of limited educational activities in some parts and none at all in others. During those years, all efforts were directed towards the crisis and the civil war. In the circumstances, there was no attention to the question of Church and State in education during the four-year period. It was after the end of hostilities that the issue was taken up once more. The general position of the schools at this time was summarised in a speech by the Chairman of the East Central State School Board, Chief J.M. Echerue. In it, he said inter alia:

"The buildings of most of our educational institutions were either completely destroyed or seriously damaged; books, equipment, and utensils looted or burned. The result is that today the vast majority of our children are studying under very cruel conditions".<sup>16</sup>

Another aspect of the crisis as it affected education was the alleged support of the secessionist regime by the Missionary Societies during the civil war. At the interviews with the Church leaders, some of them argued that one of the reasons for the State take-over of their schools was the alleged support for the Biafran regime. This view was expressed by one of the Catholic Bishops among others. He said:

"because the Catholic Mission was sympathetic to the suffering of the masses during the civil war, the Government believed that the humanitarian activities of the Church prolonged the civil war, and as a reprisal against the Church, its schools were taken over by the Government".<sup>17</sup>

The Bishops also argued that the Government believed that the Church had a great deal of influence over the people through its schools. In order to make the Church less powerful, its schools had to be taken over by the State.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Rivers State of Nigeria: Ministry of Education Progress Report 1966-74, (an unpublished mimeographed document), p.6.

<sup>16</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: Official News Text No. 57, op. cit. p.7.

<sup>17</sup> Interview with His Lordship Dr. Mark Unegbu, Catholic Bishop of Owerri, 25th November, 1975.

<sup>18</sup> Interview with the Catholic Bishop of Owerri, op. cit. and with the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, Dr. Francis Arinze, op. cit.

It was also the view of the Catholic leaders that the Federal Military Government believed that the people of Eastern Nigeria were able to challenge the rest of the country because they were more advanced educationally than most other parts of the Federation. The State take-over of the schools was therefore designed to slow down the rate of educational development in the East to enable the other sections of the country to catch up.<sup>19</sup>

There is some evidence which renders the above reason highly debatable. In the first place, the Churches did not dispute giving humanitarian relief help to the people on the Biafran side of the fighting line. The Catholic Caritas Internationalis and the World Council of Churches defied the authority of the Federal Military Government and flew in food and medicine into Biafra without permission from Lagos. This was unlike the International Red Cross which negotiated with the Federal Authorities for permission to send relief supplies into the secessionist held territories.

It is also true that the two religious organisations operated only on the Biafran side all through the civil war. The Federal authorities protested against this but the Churches went ahead and flew in what they could without permission from Lagos. Each of their two organisations later bought its own planes to fly in relief supplies into Biafra. They continued doing this till the end of the civil war.<sup>20</sup>

It must however be added that the Churches did not start aiding Biafra until after the Vatican and the World Council of Churches had appealed to both sides without success, to stop fighting. According to the Churches, their relief activities were intended for the starving civilian population and not for the fighting forces.

It is also on record that the Caritas Internationalis was the first to launch its relief operations for Biafra. This was with £200,000 worth

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<sup>19</sup>Interview with the Catholic Bishop of Owerri, op. cit.

<sup>20</sup>Forsyth, F., The Biafran Story, op. cit. pp. 178-186.

of supplies flown in on the 23rd of April, 1968.<sup>21</sup> This was followed in September by a report "from Dublin that the people of Ireland have raised £250,000 for relief of refugees in Biafra."<sup>22</sup> In October the same year, the German Churches made "available £10,000 through the World Council of Churches for the maintenance of refugees in Biafra". Two months later, 6th December, 1968, Pope Paul VI was quoted as having expressed "grave concern over the fate of human lives, particularly children now exposed to danger as a result of the Nigerian war.."<sup>23</sup>

The evidence as outlined above clearly suggests that the allegation of the Churches' assistance to Biafra was not without foundation. What is not clear is whether their aid was limited to food and medical supplies or whether it included military assistance as was constantly alleged by the Federal authorities. The Churches themselves deny that they gave any military aid to Biafra. The prevailing tense political and military atmosphere in 1975 made many of the people interviewed afraid to talk freely on what actually happened. For this reason, it was not possible to find out, or to be categorical on exactly what happened. It is also not clear whether or not the Biafran authorities reached any agreement with the Churches in relation to what would happen to their schools in the East after the civil war. It may be many more years before the whole story could be told.

The arguments of the Church leaders on why their schools were nationalised would seem to be further weakened by the fact that the take-over exercise was not confined to the Eastern States. For instance, as of August, 1973, a total of eight out of the then twelve states in the Federation had also taken over Voluntary Agency schools in their areas.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>21</sup> Ojukwu, C.O., Biafra: Selected Speeches with Journal of Events, op. cit. p. 252.

<sup>22</sup> ibid., p. 344.

<sup>23</sup> ibid., p. 363.

<sup>24</sup> Commissioner for Education, East Central State: Nigerian Observer, Thursday August 2, 1973.

They included the former Mid-West (now Bendel),<sup>25</sup> the former South-Eastern (now Cross River),<sup>26</sup> the East Central, the Rivers, the Lagos,<sup>27</sup> the Western, Kwara and the North-Central States.<sup>28</sup> The eight were made up of all the six Southern-, and two of the six Northern-Nigerian States (see fig V, Chapter Two).

Furthermore, the Military Governor of North-Western State, Assistant Police Commissioner, Usman Faruk was quoted as saying that: " It is the decision of the Supreme Military Council that all States in the Federation should take over the Voluntary Agency Schools". According to the Governor, every State in the country was bound to carry out the decision. He added that enough scope had been allowed to each State as to the timing and the method of the take-over.<sup>29</sup>

The Commissioner for Education, East Central State was also reported as saying that "State take-over of schools is a national policy of the Federal Military Government. Other State Governments which have not yet taken over schools will soon do so".<sup>30</sup>

At the interviews, the author asked the Church leaders whether they still believed that the state take-over of their schools was a reprisal against them, for the alleged support to Biafra in view of the fact that other States outside the East had already done exactly the same thing.

There was also the point that the measure was said to be a national policy.

To the above question, one of the Church leaders (RCM) replied that it was wrong for the schools to have been taken over first in the Eastern States where most of the fighting took place and as a result, left many of the schools either completely destroyed or looted. The take-over, according to him, should have started with the other States where the schools were intact.

<sup>25</sup>The Nigerian Observer, April 1, 1971, p.1., see also Mid-Western State of Nigeria: Education Edict 1972 (Edict No. 5 of 1973) Government Printer, Benin-City.

<sup>26</sup>The Nigerian Daily Times, Wednesday, April 4, 1973.

<sup>27</sup>The Renaissance, Monday, November 26, 1973, p. 24.

<sup>28</sup>The Nigerian Observer, Monday, January 24, 1972, p. 20.

<sup>29</sup>The Nigerian Daily Times, August 19th, 1972, p.2.

<sup>30</sup>The Renaissance, Saturday April 14, 1973, p.1; see also The Nigerian Observer, Monday April 16th, 1973, p.1.

He further argued that the Eastern States should have waited for the Missionary Societies to reconstruct the schools before taking them over.<sup>31</sup>

When the same question was raised with an Anglican Bishop, he disagreed with the Catholic view and argued that if the Churches had been allowed to reconstruct the schools, it would have been more difficult for the States to take them over. He believed that if that had happened, the position would have gone back to what it was before the crisis - stiff opposition by the Missionary Societies, particularly the RCM.<sup>32</sup> This same view was expressed by the East Central State Deputy Chief Inspector of Education, Mr. Otuka when the question was put to him by the author.<sup>33</sup>

Considering the policy of the Eastern Nigeria Government and the measures it took towards state take-over of primary education before the outbreak of the national crisis, and the evidence as outlined above, it seems likely that the reasons given by the Church leaders for the state take-over of their schools were not a major consideration in the nationwide nationalization of Voluntary Agency schools. What was more likely was that the political atmosphere created by the crisis made it easier for the state take-over than it would have been under normal circumstances. The seemingly greater opposition to the measure by the Missionary Societies in the East should therefore be seen against the background of their greater influence in the former Eastern Region before the crisis.

## 10.2 The State Take-Over of the Schools and the Education Edicts

When the schools reopened after the civil war, they were directly managed and supervised by the State's Ministries of Education. The first indication that the schools were about to be nationalized came on the 9th of July, 1970. This was when the East Central State Commissioner for Education,

<sup>31</sup> Interview with the Catholic Bishop of Owerri op. cit.

<sup>32</sup> Interview with Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu, Anglican Bishop of Enugu Diocese, 15th December, 1975.

<sup>33</sup> Interview with the Deputy Chief Inspector of Education, East Central State, Enugu, 20th August, 1975.

Dr. Magnus Adiele convened a meeting with the Voluntary Agencies and the private proprietors of schools at Enugu. According to the Commissioner, the purpose of the meeting was to:

- "(i) acquaint them with details of Government policy on the take-over of the control and management of all schools in the State; and
- (ii) pay tribute to their historic contributions to the progress of education in this part of the country".<sup>34</sup>

The Commissioner was not consulting the agencies and bodies for their views on the policy. Instead, it was only to inform them that the Military Government had decided to take over the control and management of all the schools. As was to be expected, some of them were opposed to the policy decision but could do nothing more than that in view of the then prevailing political atmosphere and the state of emergency in all parts of Eastern Nigeria at the time.

Six months after the meeting, January, 1971, the East Central State Government promulgated its Public Education Edict 1970 (Edict No. 2 of 1971). By it, all primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions in the State were nationalized with effect from "the 26th day of May, 1970". The Rivers State followed next with its Education (Proprietorship and Management of Schools) Edict 1971 (Edict No. 14 of 1971) also nationalising all primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions in the State with retrospective effect from "the 1st day of September, 1968". The South-Eastern State was the last of the three to take over schools. Its own Education Edict (No. 5 of 1975) was promulgated with retrospective effect from 1st April, 1973 and by it, the state take-over of all Voluntary Agency schools in the three States was completed.

A comparative study of the three Edicts shows that their provisions in all essential respects are very much the same. For this reason, our

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<sup>34</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: Annual Report 1970, Official Document, No. 9 of 1973, p.3.

illustrations are drawn from one of them - that of the East Central State. These are taken from the amended version of the original Edict issued on 6th September, 1974. Its main provisions are as outlined below:

I. Transfer of Schools to the State:

The Edict transferred and vested the following in the State:

"(a) every property used for the purposes of a voluntary agency or private school or forming part of such voluntary agency or private school, being property held immediately before the appointed day by the proprietor of that school or by trustees for the purposes of that school; and

(b) all rights and liabilities to which any such proprietor or trustees were entitled or subject immediately before the appointed day, being rights and liabilities acquired or incurred solely for the purposes of managing such property as aforesaid or otherwise carrying out the business of the school or any part thereof."<sup>35</sup>

Also taken over were schools owned and managed by the Local Government Councils before the appointed day including "all property and liabilities" connected with all such schools.<sup>36</sup>

According to the Edict, any person who interferes with any school property including land and buildings other than for the purposes of a school under this Edict, shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable on conviction, to a fine of two hundred naira or imprisonment for six months, or to both fine and imprisonment."<sup>37</sup>

It is further provided that the State and Divisional School Boards established by the Edict, their agents or servants are authorized to enter and to evict from any school premises or property -

"(i) any person who is unlawfully remaining or residing there, or who is carrying on any unauthorised duties or business thereon or therein as the case may be, or

(ii) any property whatsoever which is unlawfully on the land or in any building or structure on the land."<sup>38</sup>

<sup>35</sup>East Central State of Nigeria: Official Gazette No. 37 Vol. 5, 6th September, 1974, Government Printer, Enugu, p. 79.

<sup>36</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>37</sup>ibid., p. 81.

<sup>38</sup>ibid., p. 82.

Furthermore, the Edict provides that:

"No action whatsoever, whether civil or criminal, shall be entertained by any court against an officer, servant or agent of the State Board or a Divisional Board duly authorised as in subsection (i) for removing any person or property under that subsection or for the doing of any other act authorised by that subsection".<sup>39</sup>

Under the above provision, many Church workers and former school proprietors are known to have been forcefully evicted from their former school premises. This was particularly so in cases where the Missionary Societies were using part of their former school buildings for Church services. Even their priests were forced out of the school premises. The only ones allowed to remain were those who had accepted teaching appointments under the state school system. But in all such cases too, such priests were immediately transferred to other schools formally owned by a denomination different from theirs. For instance, such a Catholic Priest would be transferred to a former Protestant school or vice versa.

The Edict also made it an offence for any person to obstruct the school Boards or their agents from carrying out any of the provisions of the Edict; or interferes with any school land or property taken over by the State. To do that, such a person

"shall be guilty of an offence and shall be liable, on conviction, to a fine of six hundred naira or, imprisonment for two years or to both such fine and imprisonment."<sup>40</sup>

In cases where there is dispute as to whether or not a particular piece of land or property belongs to a school, the Edict provides that:

"it shall be lawful for the State Board or a Divisional Board or the Officers, servants or agents of such Board to use such property for the purposes of a school under this Edict".<sup>41</sup>

It was also made an offence for any person to institute an action against the State for taking over any school. To this end, the Edict

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<sup>39</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>40</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>41</sup> ibid., loc. cit.



provides that:

"no action whatsoever other than a claim for compensation before the Commission shall be instituted by any person against the State or any of its agents in respect of any school or its property taken over under the Edict".

All such claims for compensation by the former school proprietors "shall not be entertained by any Court until an offer of such compensation as may be determined by the Commission has been made to him".<sup>42</sup>

## II. Right to Compensation

Under the Edict, compensation will be paid by the State for all schools taken over. But in determining who is entitled to compensation and the amount to be paid, the State will take the following into consideration:

"(a) Whether the proprietor is a community or a Church body or other society;

(b) the amount or value of contribution, if any, made by any community or group in respect of whom or in whose area the school is built towards the establishment or acquisition of that school, or the purchase of any equipment for the school;

(c) the amount of any grant made by the Government of the former Eastern Nigeria or any other Government in Nigeria for any purpose as in paragraph (b) above".<sup>43</sup>

By these provisions, many of the long established and aided former mission schools may not get much in terms of compensation. We shall return to this point when we discuss the reaction of the Missionary Societies to the Edicts later in this chapter.

To determine what compensations the former school proprietors are entitled to, a "State School Valuation and Compensation Commission" has been constituted. Its functions were outlined as follows:

"(a) to ascertain the value in money of any property vested in the State or used by the State Board or a Divisional Board by virtue of this Edict in respect of which compensation is payable;

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<sup>42</sup> ibid., p. 83.

<sup>43</sup> ibid., pp. 83-4.

(b) to determine the amount of compensation to be paid to the proprietor or any other person in respect of such property;

(c) to entertain such other matters with regard to compensation as the Administrator (Military Governor) may refer to it; and

(d) to report to the Government the findings of the Commission in matters referred to it and the amount of compensation determined by the Commission".<sup>44</sup>

During the field work for this thesis in Nigeria, the Commission was touring different parts of the State to receive and hear claims from the former school proprietors. Before then too, some of them had already been paid lump sums of money as interim awards pending the conclusion of the Commission's work.<sup>45</sup>

### III. Right to Religion:

According to the Edict, apart from abolishing the partnership system of educational management and control

"nothing in this Edict shall have effect or be construed to have effect of preventing any person from practising any religion of his own choice, or preventing any parent from bringing up his children in accordance with the principles of any religion".<sup>46</sup>

The Edict also sets aside every Thursday

"which is a school day a period for religious instruction, by any religious groups, of all children who volunteer to attend or whose parents express no objection to their attending such religious instructions".<sup>47</sup>

This arrangement for religious instruction is similar to the practice in the French system of education discussed earlier in Chapter One.

### IV. The School Boards:

The Edict also established a State School Board defined as "a body corporate with perpetual succession, a common seal, and power to sue and be

<sup>44</sup> ibid., p. 84.

<sup>45</sup> East Central State School Board: Monthly Bulletin, Vol.1. January, 1975, p.10.

<sup>46</sup> East Central State Public Education Edict 1974, op. cit. p. 85.

<sup>47</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

sued in its corporate name".<sup>48</sup> Its membership consists of the Commissioner for Schools who is the Chairman and three other members appointed by the Military Governor. The Chief Inspector of Education is an ex-officio member. Its Secretary is also appointed by the Military Governor.

The functions of the State School Board were defined as outlined below:

- (i) management of all state post-primary institutions;
- (ii) transfer of teachers in all such schools;
- (iii) management and control of the teachers;
- (iv) maintenance of the premises of all state post-primary institutions;
- (v) acquisition and obtaining of equipment, furniture and other  
movable property required by all such schools;
- (vi) provision of recreational facilities and school meals;
- (vii) collection of school fees and other revenue;
- (viii) consulting with and advising the Ministry of Education on matters  
connected with educational practice and theory as  
it thinks fit and on any other matters referred to it  
by the Ministry;
- (ix) direction and co-ordination of the activities of the Divisional Boards;
- (x) any functions which may be delegated to it by the Teachers'  
Service Commission.

The State School Board may also "delegate any of its functions to a Divisional Board".<sup>49</sup>

Under the State School System, there was no major reorganisation of the Ministry of Education except the creation of a Planning Unit as a separate division within the professional branch. The other sections remained same as before the national crisis. The newly constituted State School Board was organised as shown in illustration XVII below.

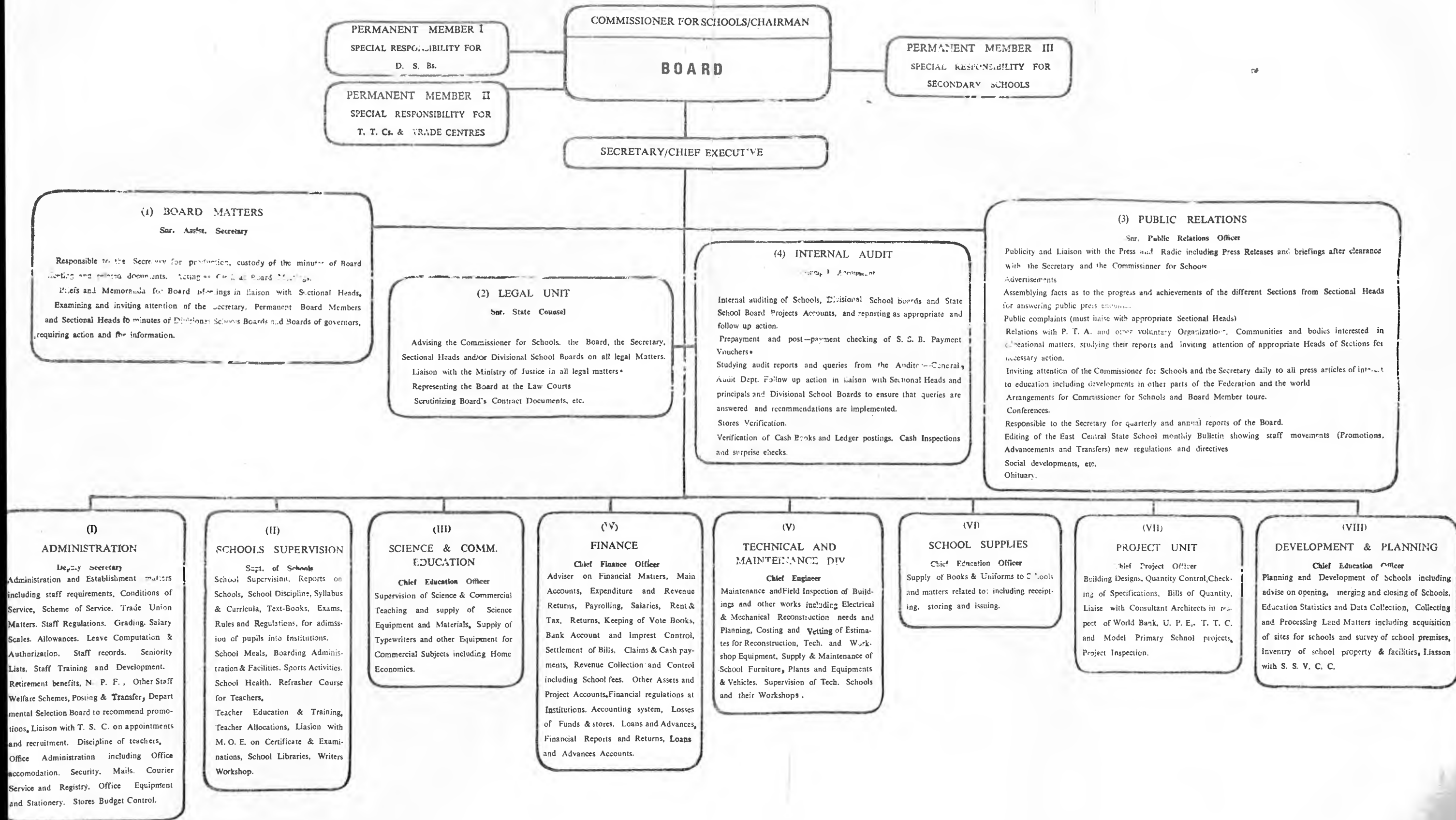
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<sup>48</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>49</sup>ibid., pp. 85-6.

Fig. XVII

## EAST CENTRAL STATE SCHOOL BOARD ORGANIZATION CHART 50



#### V. Board of Governors:

The State School Board is empowered to appoint a Board of Governors for every post-primary institution in the State. The function of all such Boards is given as the general welfare of the schools under their management. Their membership consists of:

- (a) a Chairman;
- (b) a representative of the Ministry of Education; and
- (c) four representatives of the community in which the school is situated two of whom are to be appointed from the members of the Local Government Council of the area and at least one other from the members of the Parent/Teacher Association of the school concerned;

The Principal of the school is to act as the secretary of the Board in every case.<sup>51</sup>

#### VI. Divisional School Boards:

There is a Divisional School Board in every administrative division in the State. The Board is defined as "a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal with power to sue and be sued in its corporate name".<sup>52</sup> Its membership is made up of a chairman and three other members all of whom are appointed by the Military Governor. It also has three ex-officio members made up of the Administrative Officer in charge of the Division, the Inspector of Education in the area and the Chairman of the Divisional Local Government Council. But if the last named is a teacher, the third ex-officio member is to be nominated by the Divisional Council from among its other members. The secretaries of the Boards are appointed by the State School Board.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> East Central State Public Education Edict 1974, op. cit. p. 86.

<sup>52</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>53</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

It is to be noted that unlike the Eastern Nigeria Education (School Board) Law 1965, the Public Education Edicts exclude teachers from the membership of the Divisional School Boards. One would have thought that teachers should be represented on them.

The duties of the Divisional School Boards are stated as being "generally to administer and manage on behalf of the State Board the primary schools situated in their areas, and in particular:

- (a) to transfer teachers and other staff in a primary school;
- (b) to maintain any premises forming part or used in connection with any such school;
- (c) to acquire, on behalf of the Administrator (Military Governor), and obtain equipment, furniture and other movable property required for the purposes of any such school;
- (d) to provide recreational facilities and school meals;
- (e) to collect school fees and other revenue; and
- (f) to perform such other functions as the Teachers Service Commission or the State Board may from time to time delegate to it, being functions conferred on the Teachers Service Commission or the State Board, as the case may be, by this Edict".<sup>54</sup>

#### VII. School Committees:

The Divisional School Boards are also empowered to appoint a School Committee for every primary school in their areas of authority. Every such Committee is to consist of a Chairman "and not more than nine other members appointed from members of the community and the Community Council of the area". The Parent/Teacher Association of the school is to be represented on its Committee and the Headmaster of the School is to be its secretary. The function of each Committee is the general welfare of its school.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>ibid., p. 87.

<sup>55</sup>ibid., loc. cit.

### VIII. Educational Finance:

All the expenses of the State School, and Divisional Boards, the Boards of Governors and the school committees are defrayed from funds made available to them by the State Government. School fees and other revenues accruing to the schools and to these bodies are to "be paid into government treasury". All the educational agencies and the other bodies are to "prepare and transmit to the Administrator (Military Governor) in respect of each financial year annual accounts in such a form as the Ministry of Finance may prescribe".<sup>56</sup>

### IX. Other Provisions Relating to Education:

#### (i) "The Prohibition of Non-State Schools"

The Edict prohibits the existence of private schools and provides that:

"any school established and operated otherwise than in accordance with the provisions of this Edict shall be an illegal school".

Any person connected with the establishment or management of an 'illegal school'

"shall be guilty of an offence and shall on summary conviction be liable to a fine of one thousand naira or imprisonment for five years or both such fine and imprisonment, and to a further fine of one hundred naira for every day the offence continues after such conviction".<sup>57</sup>

#### (ii) The System of Education:

The Commissioner for Education is responsible for educational planning and policy and is "to take all such steps as may be desirable for the maintenance of standards necessary to secure the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the people of the State".<sup>58</sup> The other duties of the Commissioner are to ensure that:

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<sup>56</sup> ibid., p. 89.

<sup>57</sup> ibid., p. 90.

<sup>58</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

- "(a) children in post-primary schools are encouraged to attend as day students;
- (b) steps are taken to provide school meals at nominal cost to children at school; and
- (c) parent/teacher association is sponsored in every school to provide intimate supervision of the performance of the school."

In consultation with the State School Board, the Commissioner is also empowered to make regulations in the areas of:

- (a) admission of pupils into state schools;
- (b) the instruction to be given in schools;
- (c) the fees to be charged in any state school;
- (d) discipline in schools;
- (e) the furnishing of educational returns by the State and Divisional School Boards; and
- (f) the withdrawal or removal of pupils from State schools.

Under the Edict too, it is an offence for any form of discrimination to be practised against any member of staff, teacher or pupil on the grounds of religion, race or nationality particularly, in matters of employment and admission into the State schools.<sup>59</sup> The organisation of the school system remains same as was provided under the Education Law 1956.<sup>60</sup>

#### X. Opening and Closure of Schools:

Only the Commissioner of Education and on behalf of the Government, can open a new primary or secondary school in the State. He is also vested with the power to close any school if he is satisfied that:

- "(a) an offence against the Edict has been committed in respect of that school or institution; or
- (b) in his opinion, the closure of the school or institution will be in the best interest of education or of the persons to be served".<sup>61</sup>

<sup>59</sup> ibid., pp. 90-1.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. pp. 27-30 and the Public Education Edict 1974, pp. 99-102.

<sup>61</sup> East Central State, Public Education Edict 1974, op. cit. p.92.



The provisions for school inspection are same as those of the Education Law 1956, and the responsibility remains with the Inspectorate Division of the Ministry of Education.<sup>62</sup>

#### XI. Regulations Concerning Teachers

Part IX of the Edict provides that:

(a) "All teachers and other staff within the State school system herin established shall be employees of the State Board, and shall be paid directly from public funds of the State".

(b) "There shall be uniform service conditions for all employees of the State Board throughout the State".<sup>63</sup>

The regulations on the registration of teachers and their qualifications are same in all respects as those of the Education Law 1956. Also unchanged are the regulations concerning schools and institutions and the records and books to be kept by them. They are also same as in the old law.<sup>64</sup>

#### XII. Teachers' Service Commission

Each of the States has established its own Teachers Service Commission.<sup>65</sup> Their composition and functions are also similar and these are again illustrated from the provisions of the Edict establishing the Commission in the former East Central State.

The Commission has a membership of 4 including the Chairman. All of them are appointed by the Military Governor. Its functions are as

<sup>62</sup>Cf. Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. pp. 20-1 and the Public Education Edict, 1974, pp. 94-5.

<sup>63</sup>ibid., p. 96.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. Education Handbook 1964, op. cit. pp. 21, 27-33 and 51-4; and the Public Education Edict, op. cit. pp. 96-8, 102-5 and 107-110.

<sup>65</sup>See the East Central State Teachers' Service Commission Edict, 1974 (Edict No. 26 of 1974). Official Gazette No. 37 vol. 5 of 6th September, 1974. pp. 117-121; the South-Eastern State Teaching Service Commission Edict 1975 (Edict No. 4 of 1975). Official Gazette No. 7 vol. 8 of 12th February, 1975 - part A. pp. 9-14; and Rivers State Teaching Service Commission 1974 (Edict No. 11 of 1974). Official Gazette, No. 11 vol. 7 of 27th March, 1974, Part A. pp. 1-3.

outlined below:

(a) appointment, promotion and dismissal of teachers and other employees "necessary for the proper and efficient discharge of the functions of the Commission, the State Board and the Divisional Boards";

(b) to refer all cases of professional misconduct on the part of a teacher to the Teachers' Disciplinary Council;

(c) to make regulations relating to conditions of service for teachers and other employees "including schemes for the grant of pensions, gratuities and other retiring allowances".

The Commission is also empowered to delegate any of its powers and functions "to any of its members, or the State Board or to a Divisional Board."<sup>66</sup>

### XIII. The Teachers' Disciplinary Council

The Council is made up of a Chairman and four other members all appointed by the Military Governor who also appoints "a suitable person to be Secretary to the Council".<sup>67</sup>

The functions of the Council are as outlined below:

"(a) to enquire into every case in which it is alleged that a teacher registered or deemed to be registered under the provisions of the Public Education Edict, 1974, has committed a professional misconduct or has been convicted of felony or misdemeanour;

(b) upon proof of any such allegation, to take such disciplinary action against the teacher as is prescribed by this Edict".<sup>68</sup>

If the Council is satisfied that a teacher is guilty of the charges brought against him, it has the discretion of either to:

"(a) direct that the teacher be removed from the register permanently or for a stated period, or

<sup>66</sup>East Central State: Teachers Service Commission Edict 1974, op. cit. pp.117-8.

<sup>67</sup>East Central State: Teachers Disciplinary Council Edict 1974, (Edict No. 27 of 1974), p. 123.

<sup>68</sup>ibid., p. 124.

(b) recommend that the teacher be dismissed, or suspended from teaching for a stated period, or

(c) recommend any other lesser punishment according as the circumstances may be extenuating".<sup>69</sup>

Copies of all proceedings of the Council in any disciplinary inquiry are to be sent to the Teachers Service Commission, the State School Board and the Commissioner for Education. The last named is vested with the power to approve all recommendations involving the removal of a teacher's name from the register. Those involving dismissal or suspension are to be approved by the Teachers' Service Commission.<sup>70</sup>

### 10.3 The Ministry of Education and the School Boards Under the State System

Under the State School System, the Ministry of Education is responsible for educational policy and planning, inspection of schools and the maintenance of standards. The Commissioner for Education is the political head of both the Ministry and the School Board.

On its part, the State School Board is charged with responsibility for appointment, promotion, discipline and payment of teachers and the overall management of all the educational institutions. It also consults with, and advises the Ministry of Education on matters connected with educational policy, and also co-ordinates the activities of the Divisional School Boards in the following areas:

"(a) Block allocation of teachers according to divisional requirements, and inter-divisional transfer of teachers;

(b) Disbursement of funds made available to the various Divisional Boards by Government;

(c) Co-ordination of budget and statement of revenue and expenditure of the Divisional School Boards;

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<sup>69</sup> ibid., p. 125.

<sup>70</sup> ibid., p. 126.

(d) Problems arising from school boundary disputes and acquisition of land; and

(e) Problems arising from merging of schools according to the policies worked out by the Government".

The Ministry and the State Board co-operate in such other areas as:

"investigation of irregularities in schools; matters that have to deal with inter-school sports and arts competitions, school health services and representation in the Board of Governors of post-primary institutions".

At the State level, the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education exercises "strict budgetary control over the Boards". In the Divisions, the Divisional Education Officer acts as the representative of the Ministry while the Secretary of the Divisional School Board is the representative of the State Board. Both officers are the head of their respective departments in the Divisions.<sup>71</sup>

In principle, the functions of the different bodies are as outlined above. But in practice, conflicts have been reported in the performance of their duties. There seems to be overlapping of responsibilities in certain areas. We shall return to this point later in this chapter when we discuss the operation of the State school system since its inception.

#### 10.4 Missionary Reaction to the Education Edicts

Since the Public Education Edicts were promulgated, the Churches have consistently declared their views on all the issues involved. They have done this through series of pamphlets and press statements. We shall review the stand of the different Missionary Societies as contained in some of their publications between 1971 and 1974.

In a Pastoral Letter on Education issued in 1971 by the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha and the Bishops of Enugu, Ogoja, Owerri and Umuahia, the Mission argued that parents, the Church and State should be partners

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<sup>71</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: A Rational Approach to Educational Administration Under the Present System. June 1972, pp. 4-7.

in education. Parents' right to the education of their children "is prior to the rights of the State and the Church ... It is the parents who bring children into this world. They are to answer before God, the Creator, for the way they have educated their children. The right of parents to educate comes not from the State or the Church, but from God; and they must be free to choose one school for their child rather than another. Where there is only one uniform or regimented school system, the right of parents to choose a school is rendered impossible".<sup>72</sup>

According to the Pastoral Letter, "the State exists for the earthly common good and to look after areas beyond the power of individuals, families and other groups. In education, the State encourages and coordinates the efforts of parents, communities and the Church. It does not supplant them. It establishes certain national aims and minimum standards which all schools must attain in order to be allowed to function and receive their share of the national money".<sup>73</sup>

On its part, continued the Letter, "the Church is an educator by a special title not merely because de facto she has proved herself everywhere and all through the centuries capable to educating, but particularly because she has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe and of assisting them with ceaseless concern so that they may grow into the fullness of the same life".<sup>74</sup>

The RCM would therefore, like to say it loud and clear that "the reduction of all schools to dull anonymity and regimented monotony is a violation of the principle of religious freedom enshrined in the Nigerian Constitution and in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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<sup>72</sup>The Catholic Bishops, East Central State of Nigeria: Education 1971 Easter Joint Pastoral Letter, Tabansi Press, Onitsha, pp. 8-11.

<sup>73</sup>ibid., pp. 8-9.

<sup>74</sup>ibid., p. 9.

It is a denial of the basic principles of true democracy and social contentment. It makes a mockery of the rights of parents to choose a school for their child".<sup>75</sup>

The Pastoral Letter went on:

"When we combine all this with an attempt to mix up children and teachers of various religious beliefs in a type of forced and unnatural percentage system then we have further evidence of denial of fundamental human rights given to man by God the Creator. It is only dictators and totalitarian states which go to such lengths in the denial of human freedom and dignity".<sup>76</sup>

On the criticism that the partnership arrangement divided local communities into rival groups along religious lines, the Bishops argued that religion is not the only thing that divides people and asked "What of villages, towns, clans, divisions, states, languages, etc. Must we eliminate all these in the name of unity?" It was the view of the Bishops that it was not religion that "caused the various woes of Nigeria in the last ten years, such as tribalism and sectionalism. On the contrary, when it is properly practised, religion serves to unify rather than divide".<sup>77</sup>

On State take-over of the schools, the Catholic Church "is not against Government control and management in principle. But she requests that the practical form that this takes be first discussed and agreed upon.

The Church, for example, does not insist on collecting fees and paying teachers. But she considers the choice of teachers for a particular school as an essential element in religious education. The Church must have a hand in the choice of teachers. And she insists on this, knowing full well that this is what the parents want."<sup>78</sup>

In conclusion, the Pastoral Letter declared:

"The Catholic Church, as the proprietor of many educational institutions affected by the Edict, who was not consulted before these drastic measures

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<sup>75</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>77</sup> *ibid.*, p.15.

<sup>78</sup> *ibid.*, p. 16.

were taken, wishes it to be known that she has no intention of giving up her proprietary rights to her educational institutions".<sup>79</sup>

In its own statement issued in June, 1971, on behalf of the Protestant Churches in the three Eastern States, the Eastern Area Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria said that in view of the note-worthy role by the Churches in the development of Education in the Eastern parts of Nigeria,

"the CCN had hoped that we would be fully consulted in the event of any major change in our educational system. It is to be regretted that before the Public Education Edict 1970 ECSN Edict No. 2 of 1971 - was promulgated there was no adequate consultation between the Church and the State Government despite the fact that the Churches in the ECS requested for one".<sup>80</sup>

On control and management of schools, the statement said:

"We of the CCN in the Eastern Area are not opposed to Government control and management of schools in principle ... But we are convinced that it is not in the best interest of education to expropriate the Church of her schools or to deny any parent or group of citizens the right to give their children the type of education they want".<sup>81</sup>

On the proprietorship of schools, the CCN expressed the view that:

"It is in the best interest of the nation that the State Governments recognize the Church's right to participate in education. Member bodies of the CCN, therefore, do not wish to give up the proprietorship of their institutions".<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, the Protestant Missions demand "that the Church be given an effective voice in the appointment and transfer of teachers to her schools and institutions". Naturally, they "will be interested in who goes to teach in those schools founded by the Church".<sup>83</sup>

The CCN was not happy that under the State school system, the provisions for religious instruction "are such as to reduce Religious Knowledge to a most unimportant subject". Unless it is properly taught by people who are qualified to teach it,

<sup>79</sup> ibid., p. 17.

<sup>80</sup> Eastern Area Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria, The Church in Education. Union Printers Ltd., Enugu, 1971. p.2.

<sup>81</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

<sup>82</sup> ibid., p.3.

<sup>83</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

"Our education will be a lamentable failure if it does not take cognisance of the fact no boy or girl can be counted as properly educated unless he or she has been made aware of the fact and purpose of his or her existence".<sup>84</sup>

For this reason, the Church ought to be allowed to participate fully in the education of children "for she is the best qualified to give religious education".

In conclusion, the CCN pointed out that "it is absolutely essential to have prior consultation and reach an agreement" in the event of major policy changes in education. On its part, the Christian Council of Nigeria and its member missions, "as has always been the case ... are prepared to work together and to co-operate with the Governments in educational work in so far as the aims and practices of the States are compatible with the principles of the Church. We maintain that secularization is not an answer to all our educational problems".<sup>85</sup>

The Statement was signed on behalf of the Protestant Churches by sixteen of their leaders drawn from the CMS, the CSM, the Methodist Mission, the Baptist Mission, the Qua Iboe Church and the Salvation Army.

In a Homily entitled Religion in Education issued by the Catholic Archbishop of Onitisha in December, 1972, he reiterated that it was the view of his Mission that "parents must be acknowledged as the first and foremost educators of their children. The role of the State in education should be to promote "by assisting and supporting the efforts of parents and other educators". The Church comes in to help parents bring up their children in accordance with the tenets of true religion. Whatever may be the form of control and management of schools, "religion should be essential in education". It is the duty of the Church to cater for the religious education of school children. According to the Archbishop,

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<sup>84</sup>ibid., p. 4.

<sup>85</sup>ibid., loc. cit.



"This cannot be done by teaching a Lowest Common Denominator Religion which is got by cutting out whatever distinguishes one religion from another. Such a poor relic is not the religion of any one. It is nobody's way of life".<sup>86</sup>

The "Lowest Common Denominator Religion" in the Homily referred to the common Religious Syllabus<sup>87</sup> introduced along with the state take-over of the schools. Both the RCM and the Protestant Missions maintain that it is unacceptable to them. It is therefore on religious grounds among others that the denominations have continued their opposition to the new state system of management and control.

In their own reaction to the State take-over of schools in the South-Eastern State in 1973, the Catholic Bishops there emphasized the right of parents to educate their children in schools of their choice and added: "To deprive parents of the right to choose the school to which they will send their children is to violate one of their fundamental human rights".

According to the statement, the right and the duty of the Church to educate need not be doubted "since it has received from Christ the divine command: "Go ye, therefore, teach all nations". On this account, "the Office of Education belongs by a unique title to the Church".

On its part, continued the statement, "the State has the inalienable right under God to shape education in accordance with the demands of the temporal and civic well-being of the whole community". It was therefore the view of the RCM in the State that all three should be active partners in education.<sup>88</sup>

The Bishops further regretted that "we have not been reasonably and fairly consulted before new steps were taken "to nationalise the schools.

<sup>86</sup>Rt. Rev. (Dr.) Arinze, F.A.; Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha: Religion in Education, Tabansi Press Onitsha, 1972, pp. 16-18.

<sup>87</sup>See Ministry of Education, Enugu: Primary School Syllabus, July, 1975, pp. 98-108; and South-Eastern State, New Syllabus for Primary Schools Official Document No. 9 of 1973, p. 125.

<sup>88</sup>The Catholic Bishops of South-Eastern State, Joint Pastoral Letter on Education, St. Jerome's Press, Uyo, 1973. pp. 5-7.

Whatever happened, they would like to reiterate the right of the Church to compensation "for our schools now being taken over by the State".

In conclusion, the Bishops would be prepared to co-operate with the Government in education on the condition that the following 'minimum requirements' are satisfied:

- "(a) The right to own and operate private schools;
- (b) A say in the appointment and promotion of teachers to key posts, i.e. posts important for the effective religious education of our children;
- (c) Facilities for instruction in religion and services for our Catholic children in all schools; and
- (d) Rights of parents to choose schools for their children".<sup>89</sup>

The Pastoral Letter was signed on behalf of the Catholic Church, South-Eastern State of Nigeria by its four Bishops of Ikot-Ekpene, Calabar, Uyo and Ogoja.

Another reaction from the Protestant Missions came in July, 1973. In an address to the Annual Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Enugu, its Bishop, the Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu, announced that a meeting of the Standing Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria held on the 17th of May, 1973 had resolved inter alia that:

"The Council appreciates the need for the Government to plan and execute the educational policy of the Nation, and notes that the Government and the Church have been partners in the progress made hitherto. Thus, the Council is not opposed to the Government take-over of schools progressively after making sure that adequate provision has been made for staffing and maintenance of schools".

On the other hand, the Protestant Churches were particularly opposed to "the policy of some governments of the Federation in changing the age-old and established names of Church schools and colleges to modern and unrelated ones".<sup>90</sup> The reference was to the Government of the then East

<sup>89</sup> ibid., pp. 13-14.

<sup>90</sup> The Church of the Province of West Africa: Bishop's Charge to the Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Enugu, July, 1973. Eastern Printing School, Enugu, 1973, pp. 10-11.

Central State which had earlier adopted the policy of changing the names of former mission schools. The policy was abandoned after the military coup d'etat of July, 1975 and the old names were restored.

The resolution of the CCN Standing Committee of 1973 seems a modification of the earlier stand in 1971 to the effect that its members "do not wish to give up the proprietorship of their institutions". In 1973, the Protestant Missions would appear to have accepted the take-over as inevitable and were only asking for a measure of control on staff matters, particularly for religious instruction in their former schools.

In his 1974 Lenten Pastoral, the Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha spoke again on the stand of his Mission on the educational issues of the day. He declared that:

"All unbiased people agree that the Church is a pre-eminent educator, not only because throughout history she has actually proved herself to be such, but especially because of the nature of the divine mandate given to her to teach all nations ..."<sup>91</sup>

Referring to the view of the Churches that religion had been relegated to the background under the state system of educational management and control, the Archbishop said among other things:

"Religion is central in the school. It is religion that gives unity and a sense of direction to the work of the school. Education without religion is like soccer without goal posts. It is like a journey without a sense of direction."<sup>92</sup>

In his view, it was wrong for any system of education to deny parents and children the freedom of religion. The Archbishop went on to say that "No school has the right to use force in religious matters". The Catholic view of "religion in education" was "not a dry impersonal reading of the story of Abel and Moses. We mean religion which includes articles of belief (or dogma) rules for the guidance of conduct (moral) and public worship

<sup>91</sup> The Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, Rev. (Dr.) F.A. Arinze, The Greatest Investment 1974 Lenten Pastoral. Tabansi Press Ltd., Onitsha, 1974, p.16.

<sup>92</sup> ibid., p. 20.

(ritual)".<sup>93</sup>

Although the Archbishop made no direct mention of the Common Religious Syllabus now in use in all primary schools, his definition of "religion in education" was a clear critique of that syllabus, a copy of which is attached as appendix 9. It provides for, among other topics, the study of the "Old Testament Heroes: Moses, Joshua, Judges" etc. Thus, one of the main areas of disagreement between the Churches and the States over the new system of management and control is the provision it makes for religious instruction in schools. To the Churches, it is grossly inadequate.

Finally, in 1974 all the Christian Denominations - Catholic and Protestant came together to declare their joint stand in the dispute with the state Government. This was after the setting up of the School Valuation and Compensation Tribunal to assess and make recommendations on the compensations to be paid to the former school proprietors. Part of the statement issued at the end of the joint meeting of the Church leaders read as follows:

1. "We do not consider expropriation necessary for Government to achieve its educational purposes. But if expropriate it must, then it must limit itself to what is strictly school or the equipment thereof".

2. "The Church will not ask for compensation on school buildings and equipment which it provided for the education of the people".

3. "Where land is acquired for evangelistic or missionary purposes and has a Church, or other Church establishment, and also a school building or buildings on it, the Church continues to be the owner of such land and will not ask for compensation for the building actually used as school nor for school equipment".

4. "Residential houses built for the staff of the Church, whether occupied by school teachers or not, are not part of the school and are, therefore, not regarded as affected by the Education Edicts. They will remain Church property and if the Government wants to use such buildings, it should be on terms to be negotiated with the Church".

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<sup>93</sup> ibid., pp. 21-2.

5. "Church halls built originally for Church use but later, owing to overflow of school children, used as schools remain the property of the Church and are not regarded as affected by the Edicts. If the Government wants to continue to use such halls as schools, it should approach the Church for negotiation".

6. "Where a premises acquired and used as a Church has a school building on it, only the school building and school equipment are regarded as affected by the Edicts and nothing else".

7. "Where a building has been consecrated as a Church and used for Church services but because of the overflow in school population such building is used also as a school, the building remains the property of the Church and is not regarded as affected by the Edicts".

8. "The Churches are ready in consultation with Government, to demarcate physically property that are strictly schools".

9. "All liabilities outstanding on the effective date of the Education Edicts in respect of any school pass to the Government as from that date".

Finally, the Churches jointly warned that

"without religion in education our country will be heading for self destruction. The Church should therefore not only be consulted out she should be involved in plans for the education of our children and the training of teachers, especially in religious and moral matters".<sup>94</sup>

Concerning the provision of the Edicts on "Right to Religion"(see Chapter 10.2.III), the Missionary Societies argue that one period a week is not enough for religious instruction. Secondly, their exclusion from participating in selecting the teachers to give the religious instruction, and to have anything to do with the schools, make it impossible for them to be able to organise religious classes for the children of their members in the schools. The Churches would therefore want some measure of control to enable them to do this. But the Governments had until 1975, extended no such powers to them.

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<sup>94</sup>The Church of the Province of West Africa: Bishop's Charge to the Annual Synod of the Anglican Diocese of Enugu, August, 1974, Panco (Nig) Ltd., Enugu, 1974, pp. 6-8; see also The Sunday Renaissance, "The Church and Us", August 18, 1974, p.3.

When the provisions of the Edicts on school property and equipment and the right to compensation of the former proprietors are compared with the demands of the Churches as outlined above, it will be seen that both parties are in sharp disagreement over the issues involved. For instance, the Edicts provide for school lands and property to be taken over by the State; and in case of dispute over the ownership of a particular piece of land or property, "it will be lawful for the School Boards to use such property for the purposes of a school".

On the other hand, the Churches want to retain the ownership of all lands on which there are school buildings and all residential buildings formerly occupied by their staff or teachers. Thus, the two main areas of disagreement are religious instruction in schools and the ownership of lands and the buildings on them. At present, the Churches seem powerless to do more than verbal expression of their views because the Edicts preclude any legal action being brought against the Government on its take-over of the schools. All the same, the Church leaders seem determined to fight on until some form of settlement is reached between them and the State Governments. They do not expect this to happen until after the return of the country to civilian rule<sup>95</sup> and this would suggest that the dispute will continue for many more years to come.

#### 10.5 Public Reaction to the State Take-Over of Schools

The reaction of the general public to the state school system was mixed. Some people condemned it as ill-timed while others praised it as the answer to the abuses of the partnership arrangement. For instance, in an article entitled "How Prepared was ECS Government For the Take-Over of Schools", Mr. Obinwa Onyekachukwu argued that the State Government had not enough financial resources soon after the civil war for the reconstruction

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<sup>95</sup> Interviews with the Church leaders, op. cit.

and re-equipment of the schools. In his view, the Missionary Societies should have been allowed first to rebuild the schools. He also complained that under the new system, "Teachers are posted without any regard to their religious inclination - no room for conscientious objectives". Mr. Onyekachukwu also criticized the allocation of students to schools without regard to their religion.

The article however, listed what its author described as the achievement of the State school system. They included:

- (i) improvement in the lot of teachers;
- (ii) better revenue collection in schools;
- (iii) the establishment of School Boards which have ensured greater participation of local communities in the administration of education; and
- (iv) the closure of unviable schools.

Laudable as these achievements had been, he was of the opinion that "these necessary changes could have been effected without necessarily taking over the schools".<sup>96</sup>

In his own article entitled "Hard Facts About Schools in East Central State", Mr. Okechukwu Emetuche decried what he described as the unpreparedness of the Government before taking over the schools and its failure to rehabilitate the school two years after the civil war. He illustrated this by saying that "Pupils still carry their mothers' kitchen benches to schools every day as the classrooms lack barest furniture. The children supply chalk in rotation and the teacher writes on the upper wall in the absence of blackboards. The bullet holes on the school buildings still exist as if the war ended yesterday while the roofs are as open as the bombs left them". He finally wondered if the Government had abandoned its responsibility to the schools after taking them over.<sup>97</sup>

<sup>96</sup> Nigerian Observer, Saturday, January 29, 1972, pp. 8-9.

<sup>97</sup> New Nigeria, Wednesday, May 9, 1973, p. 3.

In his own reaction to the take-over, Sir Francis Akanu Ibiam, the former Governor of Eastern Nigeria remarked that it was a "very sad issue" because moral instructions had ceased to be taught in the schools since then. In his view, educational standards had gone down and there was also the incessant cases of leakages of examination papers.

Sir Francis regretted that many parents had been subjected to straining their limited resources to educate their children. He described the school take-over as a 'tragedy for us' and observed that while all the missionaries spent their money and time to help the country, "our own people are running us down and driving us back".<sup>98</sup>

There had been numerous articles in the press similar to the three referred to above. Each time one appeared against the take-over, there would be several rejoinders in support of it. For instance, when Mr. Emetuche's article was published, several other people wrote to disagree with the views he had expressed. One of such articles was by Mr. I.E. Uchendu. In it, he said inter alia: "I do not think that the unhealthy reference to schools in the publication could be justifiable". This was more so when it was recalled "that the concentration of destruction during the war was directed to schools and every form of educational institution in the State". For this reason, "it will take many years and millions of Naira to restore the schools to pre-war level".

Mr. Uchendu as "a member of many parent/teacher associations and an executive member and treasurer of my people's community school project", completely disagreed with the views expressed in Mr. Emetuche's article. Instead, Mr. Uchendu had nothing but praise for the commendable achievements of the Government in the reconstruction of the schools and its decision to take them over from the Voluntary Agencies soon after the civil war.<sup>99</sup>

<sup>98</sup> Sunday Times, July 7, 1974, p.3.

<sup>99</sup> The Renaissance, Tuesday, May 29, 1973, p.3.



In his own reaction, Mr. C. Onwudinjo in an article entitled "Give the State School System a Chance", recalled that when the Education Edicts were promulgated, the Churches protested sharply against the State take-over of their schools. In 1971 for example, the Catholic Bishops in Lagos, Western and Mid-Western States published their Lenten Pastoral captioned "No True Education Without Religion". In it, they condemned the new education policy in the East and urged other States in the Federation not to adopt the same policy.

On the other hand, according to Mr. Onwudinjo, the public hailed the Edicts as an attempt

"to save the parents and the guardians of school goers from exploitation to which they have ere long been subjected at the hands of most Church schools. The Churches and indeed private organisations and individuals have made enough money out of running schools; let them now build up solid Christians in the homes and places of worship".<sup>100</sup>

There have been numerous articles in the press both in praise and in condemnation of the State take-over of the schools. It will take considerable space to catalogue all of them here. The ones mentioned above were representative of most of the articles.

In addition, the University of Nigeria, Nsukka has carried out several studies on the people's reaction to the state take over of the schools and colleges. The first was by Professor O.C. Nwana, Dean, Faculty of Education. He administered questionnaires on a total of 462 student teachers, Catholics and Protestants including males and females drawn from the Universities of Ibadan and Nsukka. The analysis of their responses showed that 65 per cent of the 462 respondents were in favour of the state system of education while the rest were either neutral or expressed some reservations.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Nigerian Observer, Tuesday, May 30, 1972, p.5.

<sup>101</sup> Nwana, O.C., "Attitude of University Trainee-Teachers to State Take-Over of Education" in the Institute of Education, University of Nigeria, Review of Education, Vol. 1. No. 1. September, 1971, pp. 46-51.

In another study by N.C. Anochie and others of the Department of Education, University of Nigeria in 1971, it was shown that while a great majority of the people interviewed were happy with the take-over, former school proprietors were very bitter.<sup>102</sup>

For his B.A. (Ed.) dissertation to the University, Mr. G.O. Onwuasomba administered questionnaires on 711 men and women drawn from the major urban centres of the former East Central State. The returns showed that 80 per cent of the respondents were in support of the state take-over of the schools.<sup>103</sup>

On the whole, the views expressed by individuals and the studies carried out so far tend to suggest that more people are in support of the state school system than those against it. The latter seem to be mainly from among the former school proprietors and presumably, some others with vested interest in the partnership arrangement.

#### 10.6 The State School System in Practice, 1970-75

How the State school system has operated since its inception is examined in relation to the main objectives it was set up to accomplish. This was, among others, the elimination of the abuses of the partnership arrangement as they were outlined in the last chapter. What has happened so far in those areas are discussed in relation to the criticisms.

The first is poor conditions of service for teachers including delay in the payment of their salaries. To assess what the new system had done about this problem, evidence was gathered from both official and unofficial sources. The former included the Ministries of Education and the School Boards. The latter were made up of questionnaires to heads of primary and secondary schools and interviews with some of them. In all, three questionnaires were designed.

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<sup>102</sup>Department of Education Library, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

<sup>103</sup>Onwuasomba, G.O., Attitude of the People of the East Central State to Public Schools. B.A. (Ed.) Dissertation, Department of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, 1972, pp. 21-2.

The first two were administered on headmasters of primary, and principals of secondary schools. The third was on the Secretaries of the Divisional School Boards who are responsible for the payment of teachers' salaries. Copies of the questionnaires are attached as appendices 4, 5 and 6 respectively. They were on four main aspects of the school system - conditions of service for teachers, strengths and weaknesses of the state school system, denominational distribution of pupils and students in the schools and local community participation in their management.

At the time of the field work in 1975, the distribution of primary and secondary schools in the then three Eastern States was as shown below. Table XXXVIII Primary and Secondary Schools in the Eastern States of Nigeria.<sup>104</sup>

| State         | Type of School |           |
|---------------|----------------|-----------|
|               | Primary        | Secondary |
| East Central  | 3,602          | 233       |
| South-Eastern | 1,495          | 73        |
| Rivers        | 558            | 48        |
| Total         | 5,655          | 354       |

In addition, there were 66 Administrative Divisions in the States distributed as follows:

|               |     |     |       |    |
|---------------|-----|-----|-------|----|
| East Central  | ... | ... | ...   | 34 |
| South-Eastern | ... | ... | ...   | 14 |
| Rivers        | ... | ... | ...   | 18 |
|               |     |     | Total | 66 |

Each of them had its own Divisional School Board.

On the whole, 274 questionnaires were administered on heads of primary schools in the States. The questionnaires were distributed as follows:

<sup>104</sup> See East Central State School Board: Circular No. SSB/ADS/37/111/473 of 21st July, 1975; South-Eastern State Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1973. Table 8.1 and 10, pp. 8 and 18; and Rivers State Ministry of Education, Progress Report 1966-1974. Table XIV, p.23.

|               |     |     |     |     |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| East Central  | ... | ... | ... | 136 |
| South-Eastern | ... | ... | ... | 84  |
| Rivers        | ... | ... | ... | 54  |
| Total         |     |     |     | 274 |

In the case of the East Central State, 4 primary schools were selected from each of the 34 Divisions and questionnaires administered to their headmasters; 6 from each of the 14 Divisions in the South-Eastern State; and 3 to each of the 18 Divisions in the Rivers State. The schools were selected to include those formerly managed by the different agencies - the RCM, the Protestant Missions and the Government. The schools were also made up of those located both in the urban and the rural areas.

Of the 274 copies of the questionnaire administered either in person or by post, a total of 180 or 65.7 per cent were either completely or partially filled and returned. Their distribution among the States and the former school proprietors were as shown in the table below.

Table XXXIX. Heads of Primary School Questionnaire Returns

| Former Controlling Agency | E.C.S. | S.E.S. | R.S. | Total |
|---------------------------|--------|--------|------|-------|
| Roman Catholic Mission    | 41     | 15     | 8    | 64    |
| The Protestant Missions   | 38     | 21     | 16   | 75    |
| Government and the L.A.'s | 27     | 9      | 5    | 41    |
| Number of Returns         | 106    | 45     | 29   | 180   |
| Number Despatched         | 136    | 84     | 54   | 274   |
| Percentage of Response    | 77.9   | 53.6   | 53.7 | 65.7  |

In all, 194 copies of the questionnaire for heads of secondary schools were distributed in the three states. The number to each State was as follows:

|               |     |     |     |     |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| East Central  | ... | ... | ... | 102 |
| South-Eastern | ... | ... | ... | 56  |
| Rivers        | ... | ... | ... | 36  |
| Total         |     |     |     | 194 |

Four secondary schools were selected from each of the Administrative Divisions in the East Central State, four from each in the South-Eastern and two from each in the Rivers State. The selected schools included those formerly owned and managed by the major agencies and bodies both from urban and rural areas of the states. The returns were as shown below:

Table XL. Heads of Secondary School Questionnaire Returns

| Former Controlling Agency   | E.C.S. | S.E.S. | R.S. | Total |
|-----------------------------|--------|--------|------|-------|
| Roman Catholic Mission      | 25     | 8      | 5    | 38    |
| Individuals and Communities | 22     | 4      | 2    | 28    |
| The Protestant Missions     | 20     | 7      | 6    | 33    |
| Government and the L.A.'s   | 8      | 2      | 1    | 11    |
| Number of Returns           | 75     | 21     | 14   | 110   |
| Number Despatched           | 102    | 56     | 36   | 194   |
| Percentage of Response      | 73.5   | 37.5   | 38.9 | 56.7  |

A copy of the questionnaire for the Secretaries of the Divisional School Boards (DSB) was sent by post to each of them in the 66 Administrative Divisions. The response from each of the three States was as shown below:

| East Central | South-Eastern | Rivers | Total |
|--------------|---------------|--------|-------|
| 23           | 8             | 10     | 41    |

Here the overall response was 62.1 per cent.

In addition to the information gathered through the questionnaires, 30 primary schools - 15 in the East Central, 9 in the South-Eastern, and 6 in the Rivers States were visited by the author. The list of the 30 schools is attached as appendix 3. Similar visits were also made to 20 secondary schools - 10, 6 and 4 from each of the States respectively. The schools formerly belonged to the different agencies and located in both urban and rural areas of the States. The 20 secondary schools are included in Appendix 3.

All the visits were made on previous appointments with the heads of the institutions. During each of them, the main topics discussed with the heads were: teachers' conditions of service, strengths and weaknesses of the State school system, denominational distribution of pupils and students in the schools and local community participation in their management. After discussing with the heads, the author was taken round the schools to see things for himself. All the visits were made between October and December, 1975, when the schools were in session.

From all the sources of information as outlined above, the findings were as stated below. They are given along the lines of the major criticisms of the partnership arrangement and the areas of the school system investigated.

#### 10.6.1 Conditions of Service for Teachers

There is abundant evidence on the service conditions for teachers under the State school system of management and control. As it is not possible to touch on all of them, we shall therefore draw from a few of the sources. The 290 copies of the questionnaires received back from the heads of primary and secondary schools were unanimous on the point that teachers' conditions of service were then same in all respects as those of their counterparts in either the government service or other employments. In fact, this was true of teachers all over the country. Their salary scales, leave and other allowances, promotion prospects and general service conditions were harmonized with those of the other workers by the Federal Government in 1974.

The evidence from the questionnaires is supported by the Report of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Public Service Review Commission and its acceptance and implementation by the Governments of the Federation in December, 1974. Under it, all public employees in the country were thence to enjoy common salary scales and conditions of service depending on qualifications and experience but irrespective of whether in teaching or in other jobs. In other words, people with equivalent qualifications and experience receive

comparable salaries irrespective of whether they are teachers or in other employments.<sup>105</sup>

There is evidence to show that the new conditions of service have been implemented by the State Governments. In the case of the East Central State for example, between September 1974 and May, 1975, a total of 3,145 teachers had been promoted to various higher positions in the profession. They ranged from Principal Class I (equivalent to the post of a Permanent Secretary in the civil service), through Principal classes II and III, Senior Masters, Masters Grades I - III to Assistant Masters Grades I - III.<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, teachers' retiring age in the East Central State had also been brought at par with that of the civil servants. According to the State School Board Circular No. SSB/ADS/40/69 of 16th May, 1975, all teachers in school system were thence to retire at the age of 55 years, the same as in the civil service.<sup>107</sup>

Another circular by the Board, No. SSB/ADS/66/S/1/12 directed that "Confidential Annual Reports" were to be submitted to the Board in respect of all teachers by their Headmasters and Principals. This is the same practice as in the civil service. The Confidential Reports were to form a part of the teachers' record of service for purposes of future promotions and the like.<sup>108</sup>

The Government had also extended "free medical treatment in all state-owned hospitals" to teachers as had long been the case with the civil servants.<sup>109</sup>

In appreciation of their improved service conditions, the teachers' Unions in the East Central State sent a delegation to the Military Governor

<sup>105</sup> See Federal Republic of Nigeria: Public Service Review Commission Report on Grading and Pay Vol. II, 1972-74, pp.1-5; and Government Views on The Report of the Public Service Review Commission, December, 1974, pp.1-6.

<sup>106</sup> East Central State School Board: File No. SSB/ADS/171/T.133; see also the Board's Monthly Bulletin, Vol.III, April/May, 1975, pp.3 and 19-46.

<sup>107</sup> East Central State School Board: Monthly Bulletin, Vol.IV, June 1975, p.8.

<sup>108</sup> ibid., p.9.

<sup>109</sup> The Renaissance, July 19, 1975, p.3.

"to express their gratitude for the able way he had elevated the relative position of the teaching profession in the State". In his reply, the Governor said inter alia, "to whom much is given much is expected". He went on to say that in appreciation of their elevated status, teachers should endeavour to show leadership, devotion to duty and discipline in their job.<sup>110</sup>

On the payment of teachers' monthly salaries, the questionnaire returns from the Headmasters, Principals and the Secretaries of the Divisional School Boards show that between October 1974 and September, 1975, teachers' salaries had been promptly paid within the last weeks of the twelve-month period. There were, however, occasional instances of delay ranging from three days to one week after the end of the month. These were all in the remote Divisions and were explained by transport difficulties and/or the absence or remoteness of a Government Treasury in the Divisions concerned.

In an effort to eliminate delays for whatever reason, the East Central State Commissioner for Education, Mr. Dan Njemanze, directed in May, 1975, that "teachers must be paid their salaries before any other where it comes to who comes first, and that provided the teacher involved is qualified and has applied, car advance will be paid to him before any other class of employee."<sup>111</sup>

The existing job position of the teachers was summarized by the former Administrator of the East Central State. Mr. Ukpabi Asika. In a congratulatory message to the Nigeria Union of Teachers "on its victory in the battle for uniform and equitable service conditions for the teachers in Nigeria", he said inter alia:

"I would urge the Nigeria Union of Teachers to now set their sights on new ventures. I believe myself that their basic struggles, the struggles to establish for the teaching profession a career and status in society in no way deficient and in no way inferior to any other, have been won..."

<sup>110</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: Monthly News Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 5, June 1975, pp. 14-15.

<sup>111</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: Monthly Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 4, May, 1975, p.9.



According to the Administrator, "the new status of the teacher has now been recognised by the Society which now accepts that the Headmaster - Nna Titi<sup>112</sup> - can also drive a car of his own". This was contrary to what a Headmaster could aspire for under the partnership arrangement.<sup>113</sup>

Thus, under the state school system, the teachers, not only in the Eastern States, but also in the other parts of the Federation now enjoy the same conditions of service as their counterparts in the public service and other employments.

On the other hand, the improved lot of the teachers cannot be solely attributed to the State take-over of the schools. After all, the Public Service Review Commission through which it was achieved, applied not only to teachers but to all public employees in the country. But realizing that the state take-over of the schools was a national policy, it could be argued that the harmonization exercise might not have included teachers if the schools had not been taken over by the States. It is on this assumption that the objective of the take-over as it affected teachers, could be said to have been accomplished by 1975.

There was also the earlier argument by the Government that it could not take full responsibility for the teachers because they were not its direct employees. But under the provisions of the Education Edicts, the teachers are now directly employed by the Governments. It could be argued that this was made possible largely by the new oil wealth of the country. If this is correct, then, the principal reason why the State could not assume full

<sup>112</sup>"Nna Titi" was a derogatory term for the village headmaster whose poor conditions of service under the partnership arrangement would never permit him to aspire to more than owning a push bicycle after many years of service. To own a car was entirely beyond his employment prospects. But today, many primary school headmasters ride their own cars bought with advances from the Government and maintained from allowances also from the Government on the same terms as was formerly exclusive to senior civil servants. Literally, "Nna Titi" means the father of a village little girl.

<sup>113</sup>East Central State School Board: Monthly Bulletin. January 1975. pp.13-14; see also Ministry of Education, Enugu: Monthly News Bulletin, Vol. 1, No. 1, January/February, 1975, p.18.

responsibility for teachers under the partnership arrangement was because the economy could not yet bear the burden. In that case, the much projected reason of their not being the direct employees of the Government was, in the final analysis, only secondary.

#### 10.6.2. Employment of Too Many Expatriate Staff by the Missions

It will be recalled that at the end of the civil war, the expatriate teachers and the managers of schools in the former Eastern Region were not allowed by the Federal Military Government to return to their jobs. For this reason, until 1972, there were no such personnel in the three States. But since then, non-missionary expatriate teachers such as those of the British Voluntary Service Overseas and the Canadian University Service Overseas, have been allowed into the former South-Eastern (now Cross-River) and the Rivers States.

In the case of the Cross-River State, its chief Planning Officer in the Ministry of Education, estimated that there were about 30 such teachers in the State in September, 1975.<sup>114</sup> His counterpart in the Rivers State, Chief S.O. Agbaru gave the number of such teachers in his state as 23.<sup>115</sup> As of August, 1975, there were no expatriate teachers in the East Central State. Although the ban on them had been lifted by the Federal Military Government by that date, no move had then been made towards their recruitment by the State Government. This was so despite the fact that the secondary schools in the State needed such teachers particularly in science and technical subjects.<sup>116</sup>

Thus, as of 1975, although the States needed expatriate teachers in some secondary school subjects, on the other hand, they had not been recruited

<sup>114</sup> Interview with the Chief Planning Officer, South-Eastern State Ministry of Education, Calabar, 16th September, 1975.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with the Chief Planning Officer, Rivers State Ministry of Education, Port Harcourt, 6th August, 1975.

<sup>116</sup> Interview with the Chief Education Officer, Mr. A.O. Uche, Development and Planning, East Central State School Board, Enugu, 28th August, 1975.

in the same number as before the civil war. It was then understood that the South-Eastern and the Rivers States were applying to the British Voluntary Service Overseas for secondary school teachers. Whatever happens, it is unlikely that the proportion of expatriate teachers in the school system will ever be the same as before the national crisis, and the civil war. But as of 1975, there were no missionary expatriate teachers in the States. To this extent the State take-over of schools and the civil war in particular, could be said to have eliminated the presence of expatriate missionary teachers and managers from the school system. It must however, be pointed out that this has not been entirely in the interest of education in the three states. As indicated earlier, many of the schools were in desperate short supply of teachers particularly in mathematics, the physical sciences and technical subjects.

#### 10.6.3. Division of Local Communities into Rival Factions, the Segregation of Pupils and Teachers Along Denominational Lines and Discriminating Against Them on Grounds of Religion

Charges three and four (see Chapter 9) are re-examined here together. On how the charges affected an entire local community - its being divided into rival denominations and each of them getting its members to sponsor the establishment of a school in the village, the new state system has eliminated this. It was done by the complete exclusion of the Missionary societies from education. On the other hand however, the State take-over of the schools had not made any difference to the religious alignment of the local people themselves. There were still rival religious groups in the towns and villages. One thing was that their rivalries had no direct effect on the establishment of schools as was the case before the take-over.

The second side to the divisive charge was the segregation of pupils and students along denominational lines by the insistence of each of the Missionary Societies on the children of its members attending only the

schools managed by it. To find out whether or not the pupils and students of the different denominations were more mixed in the schools in 1975 than in 1966, the headmaster and principals were asked in the questionnaires to supply the number of Catholics and Protestants in their schools for those two years. The questionnaire returns were as shown in the table below and is followed by the analyses of the pupil mixture in Catholic and Protestant schools in 1966 and 1975.

Table XLI. Eastern Nigeria: Denominational Mixture of Pupils in Primary Schools 1966 and 1975.

| Year  | Former Catholic Schools |      | Former Protestant Schools |      |
|---|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
|   | 1966                    | 1975 | 1966                      | 1975 |
| Number of Returns                                     | 64                      | 64   | 75                        | 75   |
| No. of Returns with Complete Data                     | 26                      | 46   | 31                        | 46   |
| Percentage of the Returns                             | 40.6                    | 71.9 | 41.3                      | 61.3 |
| Ratio of Protestant to Catholic Pupils and Vice Versa | 1:8                     | 1:5  | 1:6                       | 1:4  |

From the above table, of the 64 former Catholic primary schools that responded, 26 supplied complete information on the number of Catholic and Protestant pupils in the schools in 1966 and 1975. The remaining 38 replied that the records for the first year were lost during the civil war. As of 1966, there was a ratio of approximately 1 Protestant pupil to 8 Catholics in the former 26 Catholic primary schools.

For the year 1975, 46 of the 64 former Catholic primary schools supplied complete information on the denominational distribution of their pupils. The 46 returns show that there was an average of 1 Protestant to 5 Catholic pupils in the schools.

In 1966, there were no Protestant pupils in 12 of the 26 former Catholic primary schools that returned complete statistics. But in 1975, 42 of the 46 complete returns had both Protestant and Catholic pupils on their enrolment.

The overall average ratio of 1:8 before the take-over and 1:5 in 1975 and the presence of Protestant pupils in most of the former Catholic primary schools would suggest that under the state school system, pupils of different denominations were mixed in higher proportion in the same schools than during the period of the partnership arrangement. If this applied to all the former denominational schools, the indication would be that the state school system was in the process of eliminating the segregation of pupils in schools along denominational lines.

But on the other hand, under the new system, many nearby primary schools were merged without taking their former denominational affiliation into consideration. The merger exercise made many of the schools larger than they would have been without the take-over. For this reason it is not clear whether the higher proportion of pupil mixture really means that parents were thinking less denominationally in choosing schools for their children than before, or whether it was brought about by the larger size of the schools.

In the case of the 75 former Protestant primary schools from which returns were received, 31 supplied complete information on the denominational distribution of their pupils in 1966. The remaining 44 replied that their records were destroyed during the civil war. The analysis of the 31 complete returns shows that there was on the average, a ratio of 1 Catholic to 6 Protestant pupils in the schools.

For 1975, 46 of the 75 former Protestant primary schools returned complete information. The analysis shows that the average ratio then was 1 Catholic to 4 Protestant pupils in the schools. Compared with the ratio of 1:6 before the take-over, the indication was that there were more Catholic pupils in the schools.

Thus, based on the returns, the overall tendency in both former Catholic and Protestant schools in 1975 was the mixture of pupils of all denominations in greater proportion than before the State take-over of the schools.

As was indicated earlier, under the state school system, there is a common religious syllabus for all primary schools in the States. This is one possible reason why parents would seem to be sending their children to any school without considering its former religious affiliation.

In addition, teachers were being recruited and posted to the Schools by the Boards without taking their religion into consideration. The effect of this was that both Catholic and Protestant teachers were freely mixed in the schools. By this arrangement, the question of discrimination against them in matters of employment no longer arises. Under the present system, a Catholic teacher would normally be appointed by the headmaster to teach religious instruction to Catholic pupils, and a Protestant teacher to do the same for those of his religion. But what was actually taught in either case, was undenominational. The lessons were drawn from the common syllabus prescribed by the Ministries of Education.<sup>117</sup>

The trends in the denominational distribution of students at the secondary school level were similar to those of the primary schools. For instance, of the 38 former Catholic secondary schools which responded to the questionnaires, 18 supplied complete statistics on their students' religious affiliation in 1966. The analysis shows that there was an average ratio of 1 Protestant to 11 Catholic students in the schools (see Table XLII).

Table XLII. Eastern Nigeria: Denominational Mixture of Students in Secondary Schools 1966 and 1975.

| Year  | Former Catholic Schools |      | Former Protestant Schools |      |
|---|-------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
|   | 1966                    | 1975 | 1966                      | 1975 |
| Number of Returns                                     | 38                      | 38   | 33                        | 33   |
| No. of returns with complete data                     | 18                      | 24   | 14                        | 17   |
| Percentage of the Returns                             | 47.4                    | 63.2 | 42.4                      | 51.5 |
| Ratio of Protestant to Catholic Pupils and Vice Versa | 1:11                    | 1:3  | 1:12                      | 1:3  |

<sup>117</sup> Interviews with the Headmasters of Primary Schools, op. cit.

As the above table also shows, complete data were supplied in respect of 24 former Catholic secondary schools. As of 1975, the average ratio was 1 Protestant to 3 Catholic students compared with 1:11 in 1966, the mixture was higher in 1975 than before the take-over.

In the case of former Protestant secondary schools, complete information was received in respect of 14 of the 33 that responded to the questionnaires. On the average, the ratio of Catholic to Protestant students in the schools in 1966 was approximately 1:12.

For 1975, 17 of the 33 schools returned complete data. The analysis shows that there was an average ratio of 1 Catholic to 3 Protestant students in the schools. Compared with the ratio of 1:12 in 1966, the indication was clearly that there were more Protestant students in the schools than before they were nationalized.

Under the State school system, the placement of students into secondary schools is done by the Ministries of Education. In their application forms for the entrance examination, the prospective students choose five schools in order of preference. According to the Deputy Chief Inspector of Education, East Central State, Mr. Otuka, "the Ministry does its best to ensure that successful candidates are placed in one of the schools they had chosen. There had been, however, some cases where that was not possible".<sup>118</sup>

Assuming that the majority of the candidates had been placed in one of the schools they had chosen, the 1975 ratios of the denominational distribution of students in secondary schools would suggest that the former religious affiliation of the schools was becoming less important to parents and students in deciding which one to go to.

As the ratios apply to both primary and secondary school enrolments and the deductions made from them, the assumption has been that the questionnaire returns could be taken as being representative of the overall trends in the states.

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<sup>118</sup> Interview with the Deputy Chief Inspector of Education, East Central State Enugu, 20th August, 1975.

#### 10.6.4. Establishment of More Schools Than Were Actually Needed

As was shown earlier, the Edicts prohibit the establishment of schools outside the public system. In an effort "to eliminate duplication of facilities and waste of resources", the State Governments ordered surveys of the number of primary and secondary schools soon after the take-over.

In the East Central State, its survey conducted in 1971 showed that the number of primary schools in existence was 3,590. It was also claimed that only 2,000 of the schools were actually needed at the time. With effect from the following year, 1972, 1,590 of them were either closed down or merged with some others. At the same time, the number of secondary schools was reduced from 251 to 183 by closing or merging some of them.<sup>119</sup>

A year later, January, 1973, the number of primary schools was increased by 137 bringing the total number to 2137 (see Table XLIII). Two years later and in anticipation of the enrolment explosion to be followed by the Federal Government UPE scheme due to start in September 1976, the merged primary schools were demerged and some other new ones opened. In all, the number of primary schools was increased by 1,465 between 1973 and 1975 bringing the total to 3,602. By the later date too, the number of secondary schools had further been increased from 203 two years earlier, to 233. This was done by demerging some of the schools merged earlier in 1972, and establishing some other new ones in areas where none existed before.<sup>120</sup>

The unprecedented high increase in the number of primary schools between 1973 and 1975 may really be explained by the fact that with effect from 1st April 1975, the Federal Government took over the financial responsibility for primary education throughout the country.<sup>121</sup> The number of primary

<sup>119</sup> East Central State of Nigeria: Three Years After the Civil War, op.cit.p.99.

<sup>120</sup> East Central State School Board: Circular No. SSB/ADS/37/111/473 of 21st July, 1975.

<sup>121</sup> Ministry of Education, Enugu: Monthly News Bulletin, Vol. I, No. 4, May 1975, p.9; see also vol. 1, no. 5, June, 1975 "Federal Government Responsible for Primary Education", p.22.



schools and their enrolment in each State were to be taken into account in the allocation of the federal education funds. It was presumably for this reason that the merged primary schools were demerged and some other new ones opened. Based on the experience of the UPE scheme of 1957 in the former Eastern Region, it was estimated that all the 3,602 primary schools would be needed to cope with the anticipated increased demand for places in September, 1976.

In the case of the South-Eastern State, its own similar survey showed "that there were more schools than necessary". To eliminate the "unnecessary" ones, "about 190 schools (primary and secondary) were merged and 80 closed down" soon after the civil war.<sup>122</sup> At the time of the field work for this study, its state Ministry of Education in Calabar was working out plans for demerging some of the schools and opening some other new ones. This was being done as a result of increased demand for places and the then impending Federal Government UPE scheme as one of the officials explained.<sup>123</sup>

The situation in the Rivers State was different from those of the other two States. A survey by its Ministry of Education in 1972 revealed that there were not enough primary and secondary schools to meet the demand. The State Government then, planned that by 1974, all its 507 primary schools would have been fully rehabilitated and some unspecified number of new ones opened. By that date too, the number of its secondary schools was to be increased from 28 to 36. But in 1975, there were 558 primary, and 48 secondary schools in the State.<sup>124</sup>

From the evidence on what the State Governments had done on the establishment of schools as outlined above, there is no doubt that the over-

<sup>122</sup>Ministry of Education, South-Eastern State: Educational Progress Report 1968-1973, p.1.

<sup>123</sup>Interview with the Chief Planning Officer, Mr. E.E. Udeyop, Ministry of Education, South-Eastern State, Calabar, 16th September, 1975.

<sup>124</sup>Ministry of Education, Rivers State: Progress Report 1966-74, p.23; see also the Education (Proprietorship and Management of Schools) Edict, 1971. op cit., p.18.

riding consideration had been on the basis of need. The influence of inter-denominational and village rivalries can be said to have been eliminated. Thus, the State take-over of the schools had achieved its objectives in this respect. In 1975 too, the schools were better organised under one management than when they were managed by many different denominational units.

#### 10.6.5 Excess Government Expenditure on Voluntary Agency School

##### Administration and Financial Irregularities by their Managers

This heading covers charges six and seven (see Chapter 9). The complete exclusion of the Missionary societies from the management of schools automatically eliminated the two charges. By the provisions of the Education Edicts in relation to the establishment and the management of schools, there can be no further question of surplus funds by Voluntary Agency institutions which no longer exist. Although the state take-over itself will not necessarily eliminate cases of misappropriation of funds in school administration, on the other hand, when they occur, they will no longer be committed by Voluntary Agency Managers. It may also be mentioned that no evidence was found of any such case since the take-over of the schools.

The exclusion of the Missions from education had also meant an end to the existence of their too many school administration units and senior management personnel. To find out whether there were more or less number of these in 1975 than in 1966, the DSB Secretaries were asked in the questionnaire to state the membership of the Boards and their senior management personnel in each case.

As has already been shown there were in all, 66 Divisional School Boards and an equal number of Secretaries for the 5,655 primary schools in the three states. The 41 Divisional School Boards which responded to the questionnaire had a total membership of 205. Of this number, only

their 41 Chairmen worked full-time. The other 164 were on part-time basis. They only attended the Board meetings and were paid sitting allowances.

It will be recalled that in 1966, the RCM alone had 152 school management units and 160 senior administrative personnel made up of 8 Education Secretaries and 8 Deputies, 48 Supervisors and 96 Parish Managers for its 2,380 or 40 per cent of the primary schools in the Region. The Protestant Missions together had about the same number of management units and personnel (see Chapter 9.7 and Appendix 8 ). The Local Authorities had a total of 103 such units and 206 senior management personnel made up of 103 school Managers and an equal number of Education Assistants.<sup>125</sup> The 11 Government primary schools in 1966 were separately administered by the Ministry of Education.

In 1975, the secondary schools in each state were managed by its State School Board, supervised by the Divisional Education Officers (the DEO's) and the DSB Secretaries. Every Administrative Division had a DEO attached to it. In the case of the East Central State for example, there were 17 senior personnel in-charge of the 16 divisions of the State School Board (see Fig. XVII, Chapter 10). The arrangement in 1975 was unlike before the take-over when every secondary school was constituted into an administrative unit of its own even within the same missionary agency.

When the new system of school management as outlined above is compared with what it was under the partnership arrangement, it will be seen that there were less number of administrative units and senior personnel in 1975 than in 1966. The new set-up was designed to reduce the cost of school administration, and according to the Chief Finance Officer, East Central State School Board, it was costing comparatively less to administer the

<sup>125</sup> Okereke, C.U., A Brief Report on Local Government in Eastern Region of Nigeria. An unpublished Report submitted to Department of Local Government Studies, University of Birmingham, March, 1965, p.1.

schools in 1975 than in 1966.<sup>126</sup>

On the other hand, the administrative difficulties caused by the concentration of much powers at the State levels under the new system (see Chapter 10.6.6), and the conflict of functions and responsibilities between the Ministries of Education and the State school Boards (see Chapter 10.6.7 and 8), would suggest that the new system of management was not yet as efficient and streamlined as was desirable. Thus, although it might be costing comparatively less to administer the schools in 1975 than in 1966, on the other hand, there were still administrative bottle-necks and lack of harmony in the new state system of management and control.

#### 10.6.6. Denial of Active Local Participation in the Management of the Schools

As was shown earlier, the Education Edicts provide for the appointment of a School Committee from among the local communities for every primary school. Every secondary school is also to have a Board of Governors also appointed from among the local people. In addition, there is a School Board in every Administrative Division charged with the responsibility for the management of all primary schools in its area of authority. The members of the Board are also drawn from among the local people. There is also a provision for the establishment of Parent/Teacher Association for every educational institution at the two levels - primary and secondary. According to the Edicts, all the above provisions are to ensure active local involvement in the management of the schools.

To ascertain the extent to which the provisions had been implemented in 1975, the Headmaster, Principals and the Secretaries of the DSB's were asked in the questionnaires to state whether or not the Committees, Boards of Governors and PTA's had been established for their schools.

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<sup>126</sup> Interview with the Chief Finance Officer, East Central State School Board, Enugu, 25th August, 1975.

During the analysis of the questionnaire returns, it was discovered that those from the Secretaries of the DSB's covered a much greater number of primary schools in this respect than the individual ones to the Headmasters. For instance, while only 180 responses were received from primary schools, the 41 returns from the Secretaries of the DSB's covered a total of 3,345 primary schools in the three States. The schools were distributed among them as follows:

|               |     |     |     |       |
|---------------|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| East Central  | ... | ... | ... | 2,345 |
| South-Eastern | ... | ... | ... | 549   |
| Rivers        | ... | ... | ... | 451   |
| Total         |     |     |     | 3,345 |

Of the total number of schools covered, the returns show that Local Committees had been established for 3,124 or 93.4 per cent of the 3,345 schools. At the same time, 2,622 or 78.4 per cent of them had Parent/Teacher Associations. The distribution of the Committees and Associations among the States were as follows:

| State         | No. of Schools Covered | No. with Local Committees | No. with PTA's |
|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| East Central  | 2,345                  | 2,247                     | 2,125          |
| South-Eastern | 549                    | 448                       | 219            |
| Rivers        | 451                    | 429                       | 278            |
| Totals        | 3,345                  | 3,124                     | 2,622          |

Some of the Secretaries indicated that arrangements were under way to establish the two bodies for the schools whose own were not yet functioning at the time the questionnaires were administered.

Under the partnership arrangement, the RCM which controlled the largest single number of primary schools in the Region had no Local Committees for their management. But with so many such bodies functioning under the State system and their membership drawn from the immediate localities

served by the schools, one would say that in principle, there was greater active local participation in the management of primary schools than before.

But in practice, and as a recent study of the topic by J.C. Nnedum of University of Nigeria has suggested:

"The Local Communities appear not to be greatly involved in the operation of the schools. This seems to result from the fact that policies are made from remote quarters and handed down to the people, thereby leaving the communities with little or nothing else to do. Thus, the Local School Boards and the Parent/Teacher Associations concerned with education see themselves as rubber stamps for the implementation of policies with which they do not always agree".<sup>127</sup>

The study further showed that the local bodies were more active in the area of raising funds to rehabilitate the schools destroyed during the civil war. They were doing this through levies on themselves, the communities and parents and voluntary donations in aid of the schools.<sup>128</sup>

The remoteness of the authority for policy decisions, and the concentration of much powers on educational matters at the State capitals, were also listed by the Headmasters and the Principals in both the questionnaires, and during the personal interviews with some of them, as part of their complaints against the new system of management and control. We shall return to the strengths and the weaknesses of the State school system later in this chapter.

Returns from the 110 secondary schools showed that in 1966, only 46 or 41.8 per cent of them had Boards of Governors. But in 1975, such Boards had been constituted for 87 or 79.1 per cent of the schools. The rest were yet to be appointed. In 1966 too, only 9 or 8.2 per cent of the 100 secondary schools had Parent/Teacher Associations. But in 1975, 74 or 67.3 per cent had active PTA's. Again, 22 or 20 per cent of the schools

<sup>127</sup> Nnedum, J.C., Community Participation in the New School System in the East Central State, (B.A. Dissertation), Department of Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, June, 1975, p. 36.

<sup>128</sup> ibid., loc. cit.

had Old Students' Associations in 1966. But in 1975, 28 or 25.5 per cent of them had such Associations in existence. The position of the secondary schools in the above respects was as shown below:

| Boards of Governors |      | Parent/Teacher Association |      | Old Students' Association |      |
|---------------------|------|----------------------------|------|---------------------------|------|
| 1966                | 1975 | 1966                       | 1975 | 1966                      | 1975 |
| 46                  | 87   | 9                          | 74   | 22                        | 28   |

On the assumption that the returns were representative of the general trends in all the secondary schools in the States, one would say that in formal terms, there was greater local participation and interest in the affairs of the schools in 1975 than in 1966. But here again, and as in the case of primary schools, local initiative was being hampered by lack of adequate decision-making powers for the bodies under discussion and the provincial officers administering the schools.

#### 10.6.7. Obstructing Co-Ordinated Planning and Control of the School System by the Partnership Arrangement

As was shown earlier, the presence of the Voluntary Agencies in education was just one factor out of many others which obstructed effective planning and co-ordination. In the case of the Missionary Societies, their exclusion from owning and managing schools has eliminated whatever adverse effects their presence had on the planning and the control of the school system.

To assess what the state system had done in relation to the other problems of planning under the partnership arrangement, interviews were arranged with the Chief Planning Officers in the three States' Ministries of Education and their School Boards.

In the case of the former East Central State, its Chief Planning Officer, Mr. N.P. Iloeje, explained that in 1975, it was much easier to plan and to control the school system than before the take-over. He illustrated this by saying that his Division of the Ministry had successfully projected the

enrolments and teacher needs up to 1982. It had also planned the enrolment, teacher requirement and equipment for the UPE scheme which was due to start in September 1976. It had also put up a plan for education in relation to the second and third National Development Plan.

According to the Chief Planning Officer, the improved climate for planning was largely brought about by the Federal Government take-over of the responsibility for the financing of primary and teacher education in the States. This had made more resources available for effective planning and its implementation.

On the deficit side, Mr. Iloeje regretted what he described as "political interference with educational planning". In 1972, for example, the Ministry was directed to draw up a plan for education up to 1978. After the exercise had been completed and submitted, the Government changed its policy and the assumptions on which the plan was based, and this rendered it completely useless. New directions were issued for another plan to be drawn.

A second major problem was said to be the lack of trained personnel in educational planning. An area of great inadequacy was with statisticians. "They are not just there and this hampers the work of the Planning Division of the Ministry".

Another problem of educational planning in 1975 was the arrangement whereby the planning agency was different from the one responsible for the implementation of plans. While the Ministry of Education had the responsibility for drawing up plans, the State School Board performed the function of implementation and the Ministry had no effective means of controlling or supervising what went on after the plans left its office.

Although the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Education, has budgetary control over the State School Board, the former had not yet applied financial sanction as a means of getting compliance from the latter. Under the provisions of the Education Edict, the Board is autonomous in all the



functions assigned to it (see Chapter 10.3). The two bodies were known to have been in serious conflict over their respective functions and responsibilities. In the circumstances, it was not easy for the Ministry to exercise any effective control over the Board even if it wanted to do so.

According to the Chief Planning Officer, the situation was made more complicated by the failure of the School Board to send adequate feed-back to the Ministry for evaluating the success or otherwise of previous plans. It was for this reason that the Ministry complained that it was unable to draw from the experiences of previous plans before embarking on preparing new ones.<sup>129</sup>

When the complaint of the Ministry was taken up with the Chief Education Officer of the State School Board, he replied that the Board had not the qualified personnel to assemble and analyse the type of feedback demanded by the Ministry. In his view, there was nothing the Board could do until such personnel were made available to it.<sup>130</sup>

In the South-Eastern State, the position of educational planning and control was very similar to that of the East Central State. In both places, the Governments were in a better position to plan the school system. The South-Eastern State Chief Planning Officer, Mr. E.E. Udeyop complained that in carrying out its functions, his Division of the Ministry had the problems of poor response from the schools in sending in returns and other data needed for planning, lack of trained personnel, particularly in the areas of statistics, economics, school construction and budgeting.<sup>131</sup>

In addition to the problems in the above two States, the Chief Planning Officer for the Rivers State also complained of what he described as "conflict of schedules of duties, powers and functions among the Ministry

<sup>129</sup> Interview with Mr. N.P. Iloeje, Chief Planning Officer, East Central State Ministry of Education, Enugu, 26th August, 1975.

<sup>130</sup> Interview with Mr. A.O. Uche, Chief Education Officer, Development and Planning Unit, State School Board, Enugu. 28th August, 1975.

<sup>131</sup> Interview with Mr. E.E. Udeyop, Chief Planning Officer, South-Eastern State Ministry of Education, Calabar, 16th September, 1975.

of Education, the State School Board and the Teachers' Service Commission". According to him, such conflicts had often delayed the implementation of plans drawn up by his Ministry, particularly in the areas teacher recruitment and supply of equipment for schools. Each of the three bodies was accusing one another of usurping its powers and functions.<sup>132</sup> The problem here seemed to be that of vague definition of duties and powers by the Edict.

From the results of the interviews as outlined above, the State take-over of the schools had no doubt, eliminated the problems posed to planning by the presence of the Missionary Societies in education. On the other hand, the lack of qualified personnel; the conflicts between the Ministries of Education, the State School Boards and the Teachers' Service Commissions; and political interference had continued to make effective planning and co-ordination almost as difficult as they were before the State take-over of the schools. Until those problems were solved, the new system can hardly be said to have completely achieved its objective in this direction. Thus, planning and management co-ordination were still a major problem to the school system.

#### 10.6.8 Complaints Against the State School System

The heads of primary and secondary schools in general repeatedly complained against the failure of the Education Edicts to make provision for initiative at the local levels. The criticism was that the new education laws and regulations concentrated too much decision-making powers at the headquarters to the extent that those actually operating the schools had no powers to back-up the functions and responsibilities assigned to them.

Almost all the heads of the institutions expressed the same criticism

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<sup>132</sup> Interview with Chief S.O. Agbaru, Chief Planning Officer, Rivers State Ministry of Education, Port Harcourt, 6th August, 1975.

as it affected the running of the schools. One of the major weaknesses was the failure of the new system to make adequate provision for local purchase of basic school equipment. In 1975, all school supplies were being centrally controlled and distributed by the State Boards. The heads of institutions complained that on many occasions they had found it difficult to obtain such items as registers, diaries, note-books, chalk, dusters and other similar items for their schools. Some of them had on several occasions, travelled more than one hundred miles to the headquarters to ask for these basic items. In some cases, they had had to return to their schools after a day or two without getting what they had gone for because of "bureaucratic red-tape" as one of the principals put it.<sup>133</sup>

To keep the schools going, some of them had in the past used their own money to buy the needed basic equipment. But in all such cases, the School Boards had refused to refund the out-of-pocket expenses arguing that the headmasters and principals had no authority under the Education Edicts to spend money on their schools without prior permission from the Boards. The overall effect of all this had been the disruption of school work and waste of time travelling to and fro to the State capitals.<sup>134</sup>

Another complaint was that the new system did not make adequate provision for disciplinary decisions to be taken on the spot. For instance, the headmaster or principal had no power to discipline his pupils or teachers in any serious way without first of all referring the matter to the School Boards. As it took weeks or months for the Boards to take action, the result was greater indiscipline among pupils and teachers than was the case under the partnership arrangement. Then, the head had powers to take disciplinary action against his pupils and teachers and later refer the matter to the next higher authority.

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<sup>133</sup> Interview with the Principal, Ejiogu Comprehensive Secondary School, Egbu, 3rd August, 1975.

<sup>134</sup> Interview with Principal, Emekuku Secondary School, 27th October, 1975

One of the principals cited a serious case of indiscipline involving a teacher in his school. He immediately recommended disciplinary action against the teacher to the Board in February, 1975. Until August when the author interviewed him, the Board had done nothing about the case and according to the principal, "nothing may happen until the teacher leaves in September to go into University for further studies. With that sort of example, teachers no longer fear or respect the authority of their heads".<sup>135</sup>

The same principal also expressed the view that it was ironic that inspite of the remarkable improvement in the conditions of service for the teachers, they seem less committed and devoted to their jobs than was the case under the partnership arrangement.

The heads of institutions also complained that under the new system, they had no hand in the selection of teachers for their schools. But under the partnership arrangement, the principals of secondary schools played a major role in locating and recruiting the teachers for their schools. In 1975, all teachers were recruited and posted to schools from the headquarters. The heads of institutions knew their teachers the first day they reported for duty. Another side of the complaint was that quite often, the Boards sent teachers in subject areas which the heads had not requested for teachers and none in the subject areas of need.

There are two points that could be made about the last complaint. From the professional point of view, heads of institutions should participate in the selection of the teachers to work with them. This is particularly so when it is realized that the officials of the Teachers' Service Commission who did the selection might not necessarily be teachers themselves. The heads of the institutions with their more intimate knowledge of the needs of their schools, the local environment and their professional

competence, can be very useful as members of the panel for interviewing the prospective teachers for the schools. From this point, the exclusion of the headmasters and principals from participation in the selection of teachers for their schools could be regarded as a flaw in the new state school system.

The second point is on not sending teachers in the requested subject areas. The officials of the school Boards and Commissions argued that teachers were recruited from among the applicants that were considered qualified, and that it was not their fault that the training institutions seemed to be producing teachers more in certain subject areas and less in those that were in greater demand by the schools.<sup>136</sup> Be that as it was, the recruitment authorities should make greater effort to find teachers in the schools' areas of need.

In the same way as the heads of the institutions had not much powers of their own, so also were the school Committees and Boards of Governors under the state school system. Their main function was to raise funds for their schools from local sources through levies on the students and their parents and donations. Whatever else they did for the schools had to be strictly in accordance with instructions from the headquarters.

Another complaint by the schools in general was lack of adequate facilities such as classroom equipment, accommodation, qualified teachers, laboratory apparatus, text-books etc. In some of the schools visited, two students shared desks meant for one. Classroom space intended for 30 students was being occupied by 40 or more. Many of the buildings were in poor state of repairs - broken walls, doors, windows and ceilings. In many of the schools too, the dormitories were no less congested than the

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<sup>136</sup> Interview with Mr. R.I. Uzoma, Commissioner, Teachers' Service Commission, Enugu, 28th November, 1975.

classrooms. Under the partnership system, the students were supplied with beds by the schools. But under the state system they were made to bring their own beds from their homes.

The general lack of adequate equipment was caused largely by the destructions of the civil war (see "Introduction" to Chapter 10), and greater demand for school places since the end of the crisis. This last point may be illustrated by comparing the primary and secondary school enrolments in 1973 for example with the figures for 1965 (see the table below).

Table XLIII. Eastern States of Nigeria: Number of Primary and Secondary Schools and their Enrolments, 1973.<sup>137</sup>

| State         | Primary |           | Secondary |           |
|---------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
|               | No.     | Enrolment | No.       | Enrolment |
| East Central  | 2,137   | 1,177,369 | 203       | 97,109    |
| South-Eastern | 1,495   | 521,079   | 73        | 22,243    |
| Rivers        | 556     | 232,842   | 43        | 18,518    |
| Total         | 4,188   | 1,931,290 | 319       | 137,870   |

When it is recalled that in 1965 the primary and secondary school enrolments were respectively 1,199,693 and 58,059 (see Chapter 6, Tables XXX and XXXIII), it will be realized that over the eight-year period, there had been great increase in the demand for school places at both levels. For instance, the primary school enrolment went up by 731,597 or approximately 61 per cent, while at the secondary level, the increase was by 79,811 or 137.5 per cent. It was on account of the destructions during the civil war, and the great increase in enrolment that the schools still lacked

<sup>137</sup> Adapted from East Central State School Board Circular No. SSB/ADS/111/473 of 21st July, 1975; South-Eastern State Ministry of Education, Annual Report 1973, pp. 3-4; and Rivers State Ministry of Education, Progress Report 1966-1974, p.8.

adequate equipment despite the fact that the State Governments, International Aid Agencies and local communities had spent huge sums of money to rehabilitate the schools. There was also the fact that a lot of money had also been spent to harmonize the teachers' conditions of service with those of the civil servants and other employees. For these reasons, the state take-over of the schools was not entirely responsible for the lack of equipment, although it could be argued that the schools should have been properly re-equipped before implementing the new service conditions for teachers.

What could be regarded as another flaw in the new state system was the exclusion of the teachers and their unions from being represented on either the State or Divisional School Boards. On the assumption that the unions are dedicated to the general welfare of their members and their professional competence, their representation on the policy-making bodies could make some significant contribution to the overall improvement of standards and performance in education in general.

Finally, in the Rivers State in particular, conflicts in the powers and functions of the Ministry of Education, the State School Board and the Teachers Service Commission were said to be obstructing the implementation of educational plans. On the assumption that the conflicts had arisen from some vagueness in the definition of the powers and functions of the bodies concerned, the Edicts should be reviewed in order to clarify their vague aspects and eliminate future conflicts.

One of the areas of conflict was the responsibility over the teachers. While they were employed, promoted and terminated by the Service Commission, the School Board was responsible for the payment of their salaries and allowances, posting, housing and so on. The teacher needs were first determined by the Board which also had to request for their recruitment by the Commission. By this sort of arrangement, there was some overlapping of functions and responsibilities over teachers between the Board and the

Commission. To eliminate this, it may be necessary for the entire responsibility for teachers to be invested in the Commission, and the Board left with the actual management of the schools, and the Ministry with general professional matters including educational standards.

The problems of the state school system as outlined above would suggest that in an attempt to solve the abuses of the partnership arrangement, it had, through its extreme centralization of powers, created some other problems as serious as the ones it was designed to solve. One way out is some devolution of powers and functions from the State level through to the Divisions down to individual school committees, Boards of Governors, the heads of institutions and their staff.



## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### CONCLUSIONS; AND COMMENTS ON THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

#### 11.1 Conclusions:

"Be not the first by whom the new are tried;  
Nor yet the last to lay the old aside".

Alexander Pope (An Essay on Criticism)

For more than a century, educational institutions in Eastern Nigeria were almost entirely owned and managed by the Missionary Societies; just as the Christian Churches monopolized the supply of schooling in the educational history of Europe, America, Australia, and later, in some other parts of Africa. In the case of the older Christian countries, the erosion of Church monopoly of education started with the emergence of powerful nation-states in those places.

The form of relationship between Church and State in education varies from place to place depending on historical circumstances, political philosophy and available resources. In most of Western Europe, England, France, Western Germany, the Netherlands etc; the Governments are now the dominant partner. They prescribe standards, plan and regulate the school system and provide the major share of the finance needed for education.

In some other places such as the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand etc; public and Voluntary Agency school systems exist side by side. The former system is financed and controlled by the State while the latter is financed and controlled by its founders - mainly the different religious denominations or groups.

In yet other places such as the USSR, Albania, Bulgaria, East Germany, Guinea, Hungary, etc; the Church is banned from opening and running formal

educational institutions. All schools in those places are state owned and controlled.

In the leading Cathōlic countries in particular, such as Italy, Portugal, Spain, the Irish Republic, Peru, etc; the majority of the schools are owned and managed by the Church; although they are regulated and financed largely from public funds.

Thus, the three stages which the school system in Eastern Nigeria has gone through - monopoly by the Church, partnership with the State and the present total exclusion of the Voluntary Agencies from education, have their precedents in the experiences of some other nations of the world. In some of those places too, the partnership arrangement is still in practice, Eastern Nigeria therefore, was neither the first place where the Church once controlled education and later shared it with the State nor the last to break with the two old systems.

Again, in those places where the State is supreme or the dominant partner in education, the present state of affairs was not achieved without serious conflict with the Church. In many cases, the controversies were bitter and long-drawn and at times, bloody. World history also shows that characteristically, the Roman Catholic Church is more dogmatic and intolerant of secular education than the Protestant Churches. This is also borne out by the conflicts between Church and State in education in Eastern Nigeria.

Looking back on the series of events during the period covered by this study, 1847-1975, particularly over the last twenty five years; and given the political, religious, social and economic background of Eastern Nigeria, it strikes one that all that happened in the field of primary and secondary education were inevitable. This may be illustrated by considering the four different stages in the relationship between Church and Government in education, which also corresponded to the four political phases in the history of Eastern Nigeria. The phases and the stages, and the factors

largely responsible for what actually happened were as outlined below.

### 1. First Phase: Absolute Missionary Control, 1847-1900

The early European traders and empire-builders were chiefly concerned with the establishment of economic, fiscal and political control of the territory which later became known as Nigeria. For this reason, they paid no attention to formal school education. It was on account of this that from 1847, when the first school was opened in Eastern Nigeria by the CSM, until 1900, when the British Protectorate of Southern Nigeria was proclaimed, the Missionary Societies were in sole control and direction of all educational activities.

The inevitability of the involvement of the Missions in education may be explained by the fact that they arrived in the Eastern parts of Nigeria long before the establishment of effective colonial administration. They needed schools to be able to perform their main job of evangelization, and this was why they had to go into the business of education. There was no established central authority to restrict or stop them from opening schools wherever they liked and had the means to do. In other words, the Missionary societies were already in education on their own before the advent of colonial government in Eastern Nigeria. On their part, the local people desired education for their own good, and that was mainly why they let in and welcomed the Missionaries who introduced schooling into the local society. Both groups stood to gain and the mutual benefits reinforced each other.

### 2. Second Phase: Partnership Between Church and the Colonial Government, 1901-1950.

When the Colonial Government was established, a number of considerations made it necessary that the education of the local people should be provided in partnership between it and the Missionary Societies. In the first place, the latter were already in the field. Two, partnership between Church and State was the practice back home in the United Kingdom. Three,

the system was considered cheap in terms of cost. Four, the partnership arrangement put much of the administrative burden on the Churches. They acted as intermediate organisations between the Colonial Government and the local people. The Churches were a kind of buffer. Five, the activities of Missionary Societies were seen as useful instruments of social control. They served to divert the energies of the local people into what the Colonialists would call constructive ends, instead of agitation for political rights. For these five reasons in particular, the Colonial Government could not but pursue a policy of active co-operation with the Missions in education all through to 1950.

In addition, there were other equally important considerations why the Government had to be involved in the education of the local people. At the time, back home in the United Kingdom and elsewhere, there was a growing general state concern over the welfare of its citizens. Economic development was seen to be closely related to education. For this reason, State Governments saw it as their responsibility to provide adequate educational facilities for their citizens. There was also the British Government policy of preparing the colonial people for self-government through education. Finally, with the emergence of an organised political system and a strong national government, education was seen as a part of the overall social system which the state had to directly control and regulate.

All through the period, the Colonial Government passed educational legislation, made regulations and gave financial assistance to some of the Mission schools. A few government institutions were also established but later, most of them were either handed over to other agencies, or closed down in favour of those of the missions.

During the period too, the local people gradually realized the importance of formal school education. This naturally led to increased demand and a faster rate of educational development. At the same time, the professionals

in the Department of Education found it increasingly difficult to satisfactorily direct the partnership system to become more effective and efficient. On the whole, it left much to be desired. But on the other hand, partnership in education like the system of indirect rule in Northern Nigeria, suited the needs of the colonial authorities. That was why it remained "the cardinal policy" of the Government all through the colonial period. Thus, under the circumstances of phases (1) and (2) in the history of Eastern Nigeria, the involvement of Missions and the Colonial Government in education, and the lack of any major conflicts between the two, were inevitable.

On the other hand, it is also true that during the periods covered by the two phases, the partnership arrangement achieved a great deal in terms of providing educational opportunities in remote villages where there would have been none otherwise. It also provided schools at a much cheaper rate than it would have cost the government to do so.

### 3. The Conflict Phase: Internal Self-Government and National Independence, 1951-1965

When the nationalists came to power in 1951, the society was still in many ways a religious one, and the school system was controlled almost entirely by the Churches. It was the policy of the nationalists to secularize education. The Missionary Societies were naturally opposed to this. Some of the main obstacles to the nationalist policy were the great influence of the Churches on their members from among the local population, and the control of almost the entire school system by the Missionary agencies. Quite often, these obstacles were made to take the shape of real political threat to the nationalists. At such times, they were expressed in such concrete actions as the protest demonstrations by Catholic women, the Catholic Church inspired petitions to the Regional Government to change its educational policies, the Catholic intervention in the politics of the Region by sponsoring rival candidates at elections to stand against those

of the ruling party, the Mission's exchange of open letters and press releases with the Government opposing the latter's educational policies etc.

On their part, the nationalists wanted to build a united society in which the people would see themselves as Nigerians and not as Catholics or Protestants. The nationalists also saw the expatriate Missionaries as agents of colonialism which they were fighting against. The Missionaries were also seen as standing on the way of political independence. It is also true that the idea of a state with balance of interests did not commend itself to the nationalists. They wanted power and patronage to be concentrated only in their own hands. At first, and for a number of reasons, they found it difficult to achieve this objective over the management and control of the schools. One, all through the 1950's, the Missionary Societies, particularly the RCM, still had a great deal of influence over their members from among the local population. Two, the Regional Government had not enough financial resources to back up the implementation of its educational policies and programmes as the crisis over the UPE scheme in 1958 amply demonstrated. Three, the economic policies of the nationalists were yet to make their impact on improving the earning capacity of, and job opportunities for, the local people in general. For this reason, therefore, they were still more at home with the set-up as before the introduction of internal self-government, and still suspicious of the educated elite and their innovative policies and programmes particularly in education.

But with the improvement in the economic life of the Region in general, and the Government in particular, the latter became stronger and more financially able to implement its educational policies. Again, the political independence constitution for the whole country gave absolute powers to the Regional Government over social services including education in its area of authority. This arrangement and the participation of the ruling party

in the coalition Government of the Federation, put the Regional Government of Eastern Nigeria in a much stronger position in dealing with the Missions over educational matters than before.

On the part of the local people, their improved economic lot in general, their awakened political consciousness and rights and their better understanding of the role and responsibilities of government in a modern state over the years, all combined to shift much of their loyalties from the Churches in educational matters in particular, to the Regional Government. The local people had come to realize and to accept education as the responsibility of the latter and not the former.

From the attainment of political independence in 1960, all the above developments combined to make the Regional Government more powerful and resolute in the pursuit of the policy of secularizing education. Before then too, it had passed laws and made a number of regulations to strengthen its position in educational matters. The balance of power had very much shifted in its favour. While the Missionary Societies were losing ground, the Government was gaining. This may be illustrated by the fact that by 1965, and after the series of confrontations starting from 1956, the Government had virtually completed the arrangement for state take-over of primary education through the passage of the Eastern Nigeria Education (School Board) Law 1965. It is to be emphasized that under the Law, only primary education was to have been taken over by the State with the Missionary Societies and the Teachers' Unions duly represented on the management boards.

It should also be emphasized that the Regional Government would have found it difficult to take over any part of the school system before 1965. This was because it was not until about that date that the overall political, economic, social and religious conditions could be described as sufficiently favourable to enable the Government to pass the necessary legislation for any form of state take-over of education. It had used the first five years after national independence to consolidate its position and to prepare the

grounds. During that period in particular, it won more support of the population in general through better economic performance, distribution of social amenities and political patronage. It also enlisted the support of the teachers through promise of better conditions of service after state take-over of primary education. By 1965 too, the intellectuals, the local authorities and the civil servants were all actively supporting the educational policy of the Government. The many education laws passed and their regulations between 1956 and 1965 had also strengthened the position of the Government and weakened that of the Voluntary Agencies. Finally, the influence of the Churches on the local population was weaker in 1965 than say in 1957 or earlier. Under these conditions, the Government was in a position to implement the policy proposals which it failed to carry through earlier in the late 1950's.

Considering the circumstances of the third phase, one would say that the conflicts of the period were inevitable in two senses: (i) the educational objectives of the Missions and their organisation conflicted with those of the nationalists. While the principle aim of the former was to use the schools as a vehicle of evangelization, the latter wanted them to serve the needs of a unitary state. These would include equal educational opportunities for all, mobility of teachers, political and economic development of the society at large through the schools, bringing up the children as Nigerians and not as Catholics or Protestants, etc. As neither the Government nor the Missionary Societies could effectively organise and plan the school system without the active co-operation of the other side, it was to be expected that there would be conflict in the attempt by either of them to achieve its own educational objectives through the schools.

In most cases, the controversy involved a direct confrontation between the Government and the RCM. This was on account of the Catholic more rigid attitude towards secular education in general; its great power and



influence in the Region derived from the numerical strength of its members, its control of a large number of the educational institutions; and its stronger financial position when compared with the other individual Missions. The Protestants were more accommodating for fear of possible Catholic domination of the Region and because of their traditional more flexible attitude to Church and State in education.

(ii) There was a basic power struggle among the interest groups - the politicians, the Missions, the teachers' union, the Local Government Councils and the civil servants. In the attempt by each group to achieve its own separate objectives, conflict with those of the others was unavoidable. But later on when the politicians teamed up with the teachers' union, the local authorities, the civil servants and at times with the Protestants, the Catholic opposition started to crumble. It was by this alignment that the Government mustered enough support to be able to push through some of its educational policies by 1965.

#### 4. The Final Phase: The National Crisis and Civil War, and Complete State Take-Over of Control, 1966-1975.

The implementation of the Education (School Board) Law 1965, was interrupted by the outbreak of the national crisis which started barely one month after it was passed. For this reason, not much happened in the field of education between January, 1966, when the crisis started and January, 1970 when the civil war ended. By the last date, a new political arrangement and situation had come into existence through the events of the crisis and the civil war. The former Eastern Region of Nigeria had been divided into three States (later four); the victorious federal forces were stationed in almost every village and town throughout the Eastern States; the Churches were under the stigma of having supported the secessionist regime during the civil war; there was a great deal of political tension and fear by individuals of what might happen to them on account of whatever role they might have played on the side of secession during the civil war.

Under these circumstances, the society in Eastern Nigeria and all its institutions were disorganized. The Churches had lost all their expatriate staff who were forced to leave during the fighting. There was a ban on their return to the positions they held before the crisis. The schools had remained closed for the whole or part of the duration of the civil war. Many of them were considerably damaged during the fighting. The economy of the Eastern States was in complete disarray. Some of the teachers before the civil war had lost their lives, and many of the surviving ones were leaving Eastern Nigeria for the other parts of the country where conditions of service were better. A state of emergency was in force in all the three Eastern States between January 1970 and July 1975.

Finally and perhaps the most important, the Federal Government which was to reconstruct and rehabilitate the Eastern States after the civil war, was financially much stronger than before the outbreak of the civil war. It was then earning a lot of money from oil revenue. The 'oil boom' had meant that the country as a whole had more money to spend on education and other things than in 1965. The effect of this was that the Governments of the Federation could afford, in 1970, to take over the full responsibility for education including the payment of teachers' salaries. The old argument that teachers in voluntary schools could not be put on a par with Government teachers had been abandoned, thanks to oil revenue.

The political and economic situation in the East as a result of the crisis and the civil war, and the stronger financial position of the Governments, all combined to create more favourable conditions for state take-over of the schools. Soon after the end of the civil war, Public Education Edicts were promulgated nationalizing not only the primary schools as was partially intended in 1965 but also, secondary education and teacher training. The inclusion of the last two levels would have been more difficult but for the conditions created by the national crisis, the civil war and the oil revenue. For instance, the Roman Catholic Mission in particular,

was in no position to oppose the nationalization exercise in the same way as it had done before the crisis. Its leaders at this time, were all indigenous people who were not in the good books of the military authorities then in power, for having supported secession.

Thus, the national crisis and the civil war in particular, made it less difficult for the State Governments to take over the three levels of the school system than it would have been say in 1965. Linking up this incident with others similar to it in some other countries of the world, one would observe that major political development or revolution often precedes radical changes in education. This tendency would seem to be supported by the state take-over of education in the USSR after the Revolution of 1917; the experiences of Germany under the Nazi regime, France in the early 1940's during its occupation by the Germans, the policy of greater state involvement in education adopted by many former colonial territories including Eastern Nigeria soon after political independence.

Considered under the general world trends in the relationship between Church and State in education, the background to the Nigerian crisis and civil war (see Chapter 6.1), the educational policies pursued by the Regional Government between 1951 and 1965 and the role of the Churches during the civil war (see Chapter 10.1), one would say that the eventual state take-over of the schools was inevitable. If this conclusion is right, then, the accusations made against the partnership arrangement by the politicians and their supporters, were not the fundamental causes of nationalization of the schools.

There were such other considerations as the pressures for national unity and a unified system of education; the idea of equality of treatment and the need for mobility in the new state. The existence of many different Voluntary Agency School Managers seemed to stand in the way of a unified system of education. This feature was inherent in the partnership arrangement. There were also the conflicts between the educational objectives

of the Government and those of the Missions; the ability of the State resources to support the schools; the idea that it was no longer fashionable for the school system in a modern independent state to be controlled almost entirely by the Churches with their foreign connections and loyalties. All these together would seem to be more important considerations than the abuses of the partnership arrangement.

For instance, only some of the nine main charges against partnership were substantiated and could be described as inherent in the system. These included poor conditions of service for teachers, which the government could have remedied without necessarily taking over the schools. However, this could not be done earlier for a number of reasons. One, the government had not the financial resources to do so. Two, the state would not take over the responsibility for the teachers if the Missions would not hand over the schools. The other substantiated and inherent abuses of partnership were: divisiveness among the local population including the segregation of pupils and teachers along denominational lines; difficulty in co-ordinated planning and control; and partly, duplication of educational facilities; and on the part of the RCM only, denial of adequate participation in school management by the local communities. The other alleged abuses of the partnership arrangement although partially substantiated, were a matter of sheer inefficiency and could have been eliminated by better Government supervision of the Missions. All of them in this group could have been remedied within the system but for the fundamental considerations for state take-over of the schools.

In the circumstances, most of the charges against partnership and the importance attached to them were largely, part of the nationalist campaign to secularize education; to direct it towards the economic and political needs of the State; and to have power and patronage concentrated only in their own hands. Whether or not the abuses existed, the school system would equally have been nationalized, perhaps, later than it was done. The national crisis, the civil war and the 'oil boom' served to hasten

and to facilitate the eventual and the inevitable state take-over of the three levels of the school system.

An interesting point is that the take-over as it was proposed before the national crisis and civil war, and the final form in which it was effected, came about through the use of the self-interest of the groups within the education sector. There was the desire of the nationalists for more power in the control of the schools. The Protestant Missions supported most of the educational policies of the Government not because they agreed with them, but for fear of Catholic domination if they acted otherwise. The Government successfully enlisted the support of the teachers by convincing them that the way to better conditions of service lay through secularization of the school system. This was decisive in determining the course of events both before and after the crisis. The State has rewarded the teachers for their support by harmonizing their conditions of service with those of their counterparts in the civil service and other public employments.

Ironically, the Protestant Missions are not completely happy with the take-over. The provisions of the Education Edicts went much farther than they were prepared to support. They have therefore teamed up with the Catholics, their former rival, to oppose the actual terms of take-over. For instance, the Protestants were prepared to hand over the management of their schools to the State but not their property such as land and church/school buildings. But under the terms of the take-over, not only school management but also church lands and some other property were included. Neither the Protestants nor the Catholics are happy about this. Both religious groups now speak with one voice demanding that the Edicts be amended to give them the right to continued ownership of school land and other property formerly used for education and church purposes, the teaching of religion in their former schools and the appointment of the teachers for religious instruction.

Concerning the state school system and the objections of the Churches to it, two points stand out clearly. One, the management of the schools will never again be handed back to the Missions as was the case before the crisis. Two, they will never be allowed to employ, transfer and discipline teachers in the public school system as they did under the partnership arrangement. In relation to religious instruction, the Missions may be allowed participation rather than partnership with the State. It is unlikely that any future government would want to restore them to their former dominant position in education. Any move in that direction would be vehemently opposed by the teachers, the civil servants, the intellectuals and a majority of the people in general, many of whom have benefitted from the State take-over of the schools through appointment to key positions, membership of the Boards, award of school contracts, etc.

One may also look at the history of primary and secondary education in Eastern Nigeria, 1841-1975, from the point of view of the roles played by the different major groups and their consequences. From this angle, one striking point is that the actions and motives of each of them in education had great effect on what actually happened.

For instance, the rapid rate of development of the school system, its subsequent problem of finance, the difficulty of co-ordinated planning, control and management were partly caused by the Missions. In their determined effort to carve out areas of influence for themselves, they aided the establishment of more schools than were actually needed which was largely responsible for most of the above problems. By the same token, the Missions divided the local communities into factions. By this means, they helped to perpetuate and to reinforce the inherent spirit of rivalry and competition in the traditional society at a time when the administration of the country required people to broaden their sense of community. In addition, any wastefulness and duplication of educational facilities, discrimination in the admission of pupils and the employment of teachers

that there may have been, had their roots in the inter-denominational rivalries.

In the case of the local population, their traditional life style - rivalry, competition, and respect for acquired rather than ascribed status; and the poverty of the land, etc; led to their rather enthusiastic response to formal school education. This in turn, and together with the inter-denominational rivalries, had the effect of more schools than necessary being established, and the financial, management and co-ordination difficulties associated with this. In other words, the nature and the characteristics of the traditional society were partly responsible for the fast rate of development of the school system and the duplication of educational facilities.

On its part, the Colonial Government's open-door policy towards the Missions and education in the East, made the Voluntary Agencies more powerful in the Eastern Region than in the North or the West. For instance, in the case of the North:

"during the period of pacification following the annexing of the territory, pledges were given that Christian missionaries would not be admitted into the Emirates without the consent of the Emirs. This has meant, of course, that the educational work of the Christian Missions in Northern Nigeria has been of a very limited character".<sup>1</sup>

In the case of Western Nigeria, the Moslem religion was already well established in many parts of the Region before the arrival of Christianity there. Although there was no pledge by the Colonial Authorities similar to that of the North in the West, the existence of the Moslem religion acted as a check on the spread of Christianity and the establishment of schools in the Western Region. The above two factors in particular, made the Christian Missions less powerful in those two Regions than they were in Eastern Nigeria where they had no restrictions of any serious nature.

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<sup>1</sup>Hilliard, F.H., A Short History of Education in British West Africa, op. cit. p. 159.

Secondly, and perhaps more important, were the Colonial Government policy of active co-operation with the Missions in education, and its liberalizing the grant-in-aid system in 1948. The latter had the effect of bringing many more schools into the aided list, and also encouraged the Missions and the local communities to embark on the establishment of many more new ones.

All these together had two main effects on the school system in the East. One, by 1951 when the nationalists came to power, the Missions controlled nearly all the primary, secondary and teacher training institutions in the Region. It was naturally more difficult to dislodge them from such a position of dominance than say in the West Region where they were not so strong. Two, the existence of more schools in the East than in either of the other two Regions, meant higher cost of education and greater management and supervisory problems. The situation was made worse by the fact that comparatively, the East was financially the poorest of the three Regions.

In the case of the new class of educated elite, who became the first corps of politicians, they presented education to the local people as the most effective spring-board for upward social mobility for the individual, and for the political and economic development of the country as a whole. Soon after they came to power, their bid for popular support and their policy of political, economic and social development through education, led them to the introduction of universal primary schooling for all who cared to take advantage of it. This in turn led to greater popular demand for education, and an unprecedented rate of expansion which brought in its trail, more complications, difficulties and controversies.

From the point of view of the roles played by the different major bodies and agencies, the story was one of conflict of group interests in education, which inevitably led to struggle for power particularly in the last twenty-five years. The role played by each group was determined by its own set of objectives and interests. All these were largely as a result



of the nationalist and Church conflict of objectives for education. In the final analysis, the conflicts led to lack of effective control on the establishment of schools, their management, planning, co-ordination and difficulty in their financing.

### 11.2 Comments on the Past, the Present and Future Arrangements

From the study of the past and the present arrangements for the management and control of the school system in Eastern Nigeria, certain conclusions emerge about how the state school system could be strengthened for the future. Although partnership will not return, some features of it could beneficially be incorporated into the new system.

I. At the interviews with the Church leaders and former Mission Education Secretaries and Supervisors, the point was made by all of them that under the partnership arrangement, there was greater discipline among both teachers and students than under the present system. According to them, local school managers were readily accessible and the headmasters could reach them very easily. This arrangement made it possible for disciplinary cases and urgent school matters to be handled promptly at the local level. At the secondary level, the principals were the 'local managers' of their schools. They had adequate powers to deal with disciplinary cases, the purchase of basic equipment and some other matters before referring them to the next higher authority.

But under the present system, the removal of such powers from the local school administrators to the Divisional or State headquarters and the remoteness of these places from most of the schools, impede the effective running of the institutions. The heads waste a lot of time travelling to and from the headquarters for matters that ought to be settled at the local level. To eliminate this, some power of initiative should be restored to the headmasters, principals, the Local School Committees and the Boards of Governors.

II. Under the partnership arrangement, the authority exercisable at the local levels made for proper supervision and disciplining of teachers. In the knowledge that the local managers and heads of institutions had this authority, the teachers were more conscientious and respected them. But under the present arrangement, which requires such matters to be referred to headquarters, and in view of the length of time it takes for any action to be taken, there is greater indiscipline among teachers and some lack of devotion to duty. The lack of powers by the heads over their teachers has resulted in some form of administrative stagnation, such as lack of basic equipment like chalk, notebooks and diaries for the teachers because the headquarters had not sent them. According to some of the headteachers interviewed, the lack of such basic tools had often disrupted school work, and led to waste of time. The way out of this problem is to make provision for the headteachers to buy such minor items for their schools instead of their being supplied from headquarters.

III. Before the take-over, there was greater input of efforts and resources by the local Church or lay communities for the welfare of the schools. Although some local communities have been raising funds to rehabilitate their schools since the end of the civil war, the present arrangement does not, on the whole, make for the same local enthusiasm as existed before. Under the partnership system, the local managers were very close to the people and easily persuaded them to contribute labour, material and money to the schools. But at present, the idea that the schools now belong to the Government and the remoteness of authority, damp down local enthusiasm. It is therefore desirable that in future, the state system should assign definite financial and management responsibilities to the local communities over their schools. This will help to reactivate the people's spirit of pride and responsibility to the advantage of the schools.

IV. The present arrangement whereby the existence of private schools

is banned by law should be reconsidered. The Missionary Societies, private organisations and individuals ought to be allowed, if they so desire, to open and run private schools on standards and regulations to be prescribed by the Government. The provision of private schools should be on the clear understanding that they will not be entitled to any assistance from public funds. This is the same principle as operates in such places as the United States of America, Australia, New Zealand etc. The private schools will be free to charge fees and teach dogmas within the limits allowed by the State. At the primary level for instance, parents will be free to send their children either to the non-fee paying primary schools under the Federal Government UPE scheme or to the fee-paying private ones. At the secondary level, where fees are now nationally controlled, parents will also have the choice of sending their children to the cheaper public secondary schools or the private ones which are bound to be more expensive.

V. The present arrangement whereby the Ministry of Education is responsible for standards and professional matters, and the State Board performs the function of the actual management of the schools and plan implementation, make for conflicts and overlapping of responsibilities over teachers and school development programmes. For example, the job of the Ministry should not end with the drawing up of educational plans. Provision ought to be made for it to collaborate with the Board in their implementation. By its participation in supervising their execution, the Ministry will be in a better position to get the necessary data for evaluating the success or failure of previous plans before embarking on the preparation of new ones. If such an arrangement is unworkable, consideration should be given to adopting the type of relationship between the Department of Education and Science, and the Local Education Authorities in the United Kingdom in the case of the Ministry of Education and the School Board. There is need also for the Ministry and the Board to be provided with more trained personnel in educational planning. The Edicts should also be reviewed to remove the

vagueness which had in the past, led to conflict of functions and responsibilities between the Ministry and the Board.

VI. The exclusion of the teachers' unions from representation in the State and Divisional School Boards, the Teachers' Service Commission and the Disciplinary Council deserves to be re-examined. The teachers in their capacity as the professionals who actually operate the school system, are likely to play some useful and constructive roles in policy decisions, and in finding effective solutions to the problems of education in general. The teachers should be represented on these bodies as this is likely to make for more consensus of all concerned in matters of educational theory and practice and the running of the schools.

VII. In the same way as the Public Service Commission invites individual heads of Government Departments to sit on the panels interviewing candidates to work under them, so also should the Teachers' Service Commission invite the headteachers to participate in the selection of teachers for their schools. This could be done by organizing the interview sessions on a divisional basis. In other words, all the prospective candidates for employment in a particular Division, could be interviewed at sittings specially arranged for that purpose, and the heads of schools invited to sit in during the interviews of the candidates meant for them. It goes without saying that the head teachers with their more intimate knowledge of their schools, their needs and local conditions can be very useful in selecting the right type of personnel to work with them.

VIII. Concerning the grievances of the Churches over the State school system, an important question is whether they actually need to manage the schools in order to attain their fundamental religious interests; and if not, what are the key requirements, from their point of view, for effective participation in the religious and moral training of the children of their members?

On the first part of the question, the partnership arrangement as it

operates in England and Wales, Scotland, Western Germany, France, Ghana, Kenya, etc., shows that the management of schools does not have to be lodged with the Churches before they can teach denominational religion in them. For instance, the arrangements for the "Controlled" and the "Special Agreement" schools in England and Wales, the "Scottish Solution", the "Contract of Association" in the French system and the "Sponsorship Arrangement" in Kenya (see Chapter 1.2.2), amply illustrate this point. In other words, denominational beliefs can be taught in schools without the Churches being entirely responsible for their management.

For purposes of religious instruction therefore, what the Churches need is not to manage the schools, but some provision which guarantees them effective participation in the teaching of religion in their former schools. This can be done in several different ways.

One, the Churches may be given the right to be consulted in the appointment of teachers for religious instruction in their former schools as is the case with the "Controlled" and "Special Arrangement" schools in England and Wales. They may also be vested with the power to appoint such teachers for the schools and to supervise their (the schools') religious and moral life as is the practice under the "Scottish Solution".

Two, arrangements could be made for denominational instruction during or outside school hours. In that case, the periods set aside for this purpose, will be taken over and supervised by the Churches. This type of arrangement already exists in such places as France, Western Germany, the Maritime Province of Canada, Austria, Hungary, etc. (see Chapter 1.2.1.A).

Three, another possible solution is the inclusion in the school curriculum of religious and moral elements mutually acceptable to all the denominations concerned. An example of this arrangement is the concept of the "agreed syllabus" in the "Controlled" and "Maintained" schools in England and Wales.

Four, it is also possible to allow the Churches to use the school

premises when not needed for educational purposes, for religious and other meetings. Under this arrangement, they could organise denominational religious instruction for their members after school hours on agreed week days or at the weekends.

Any one of the arrangements for religious instruction adopted, could be supplemented by further denominational teachings in the homes, Sunday schools, Church services and special classes organised for that purpose. On the whole therefore, the Churches do not have to be directly responsible for the management of the schools in order to be able to give denominational instruction to the children of their members.

The Churches' insistence on the recognition and protection of their ownership of the school buildings and the lands is another matter. One can see their point in trying to keep 'their' land, and can equally see state reluctance to recognise it. One way out of the dilemma may be either for the Churches to accept the compensation which the State Governments have offered to pay, or ask for alternative sites and buildings to be provided for them by the Governments.

For the future therefore, efforts should be made to evolve a state system which: (i) incorporates some of the good features of the partnership arrangement which are in danger of getting lost; (ii) strengthens some features of the new system, particularly in the areas of power of initiative at the local level, educational planning and teacher participation and representation in the State and Divisional management bodies; and (iii) reaches accommodation with the Churches to satisfy their basic grievances on the basis of participation rather than partnership.

FINIS.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1: List of Church Leaders and Former Mission School Managers  
and Supervisors Interviewed

A. Roman Catholic Mission

- (i) Rt. Rev. (Dr.) Francis Arinze, Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha,  
and Former General Education Secretary
- (ii) Rt. Rev. (Dr.) Mark Unegbu, Catholic Bishop of Owerri
- (iii) Chief J.K. Nzerem, Former Catholic Education Secretary

B. Church Missionary Society (Anglican)

- (i) Rt. Rev. G.N. Otubelu, Anglican Bishop of Enugu
- (ii) Rt. Rev. B.C. Nwankiti, Anglican Bishop of Owerri
- (iii) Mr. R.I. Uzoma, Former Education Secretary and Minister of  
Education, Eastern Nigeria
- (iv) Mr. J.U. Ekeocha, Former Education Secretary

C. The Methodist Mission

- (i) Rev. S.K. Okpo, Former General Manager of Schools
- (ii) Mr. J.N. Igwe, Former Supervisor of Schools

D. The Presbyterian Church of Scotland Mission

- (i) Rev. Nwachukwu Eme, The Synod Clerk
- (ii) Mr. A.N. Udu, Deputy Synod Clerk



## Appendix 2: List of Ministry of Education and State School Board

### Officials Interviewed

#### 1. East Central State

##### A. Ministry of Education

- (i) Mr. I.E. Ejikeme, Permanent Secretary
- (ii) Mr. Otuka, Deputy Chief Inspector of Education
- (iii) Mr. N.P. Iloeje, Chief Education Officer in-charge of Planning and Research
- (iv) Mr. S.B. Ogbonna, Chief Education Officer in-charge of Examinations
- (v) Mr. S.B. Ogujiawa, Chief Curriculum Officer

##### B. State School Board

- (i) Mr. E. Nwogu, Secretary
- (ii) Mr. J.U. Igwe, Deputy Secretary
- (iii) Mr. Oputa Iworisha, Public Relations Officer
- (iv) Mr. A. Uche, Chief Education Officer in-charge of Development and Planning
- (v) Mrs. J.O. Muo, the Superintendent of Schools
- (vi) The Chief Finance Officer

#### 2. South-Eastern State

##### A. Ministry of Education

- (i) The Permanent Secretary
- (ii) Mr. E.E. Udeyop, Senior Education Officer in-charge of Planning

##### B. State School Board

- (i) The Deputy Secretary
- (ii) Senior Assistant Secretary
- (iii) Secretary, Teachers' Service Commission

### 3. Rivers State

#### A. Ministry of Education

- (i) Mr. Adumagobia, Officer on Special Duties, Professional Division
- (ii) Chief S.O. Agbaru, Chief Planning Officer
- (iii) Mr. L.A. Okpu, Senior Education Officer in-charge of Examinations

#### B. State School Board

- (i) Mr. I.C. Iniabere, Deputy Secretary
- (ii) Mr. Onuoha, Senior Assistant Secretary Teachers' Service Commission

### Appendix 3: List of Schools Visited

#### 1. East Central State

##### A. Primary:

- (i) Holy Rosary Primary School, Ngwa Road, Aba (RCM)
- (ii) St. Michael's Boys' Primary School, Tenant Road, Aba (CMS)
- (iii) Presbyterian Primary School, Abakaliki
- (iv) Presbyterian Primary School, Amaseri
- (v) St. Charles Primary School, Achina (RCM)
- (vi) St. John's Central School, Ekwulobia (CMS)
- (vii) Methodist Central School, Alayi
- (viii) Methodist Central School, Okoko-Item.
- (ix) Methodist Central School, Lohum
- (x) Apaukwa Primary School, Enugu (L.A.)
- (xi) St. Paul's Primary School, Nkwere (CMS)
- (xii) Township Primary School, Owerri (Govt.)
- (xiii) CMS Central School, Onitsha
- (xiv) Immaculate Primary School, Onitsha (RCM)
- (xv) Mission Hill Central School, Umuahia (Methodist)

##### B. Secondary:

- (i) Awgu County Secondary School, Nenwe (L.A.)
- (ii) Methodist College, Uzuakoli
- (iii) Presbyterian Secondary School, Abakaliki (Private)
- (iv) IHEME Memorial Secondary School, Arondizuogu (Community)
- (v) Ejiogu Comprehensive Secondary School, Egbu (Private)
- (vi) Government Secondary School, Owerri
- (vii) Christ the King College, Onitsha (RCM)
- (viii) Bishop Shanahan College, Orlu, (RCM)
- (ix) St. Augustine's Grammar School, Nkwere (CMS)

- (x) Denis Memorial Grammar School, Onitsha (CMS)

## 2. South-Eastern State

### A. Primary:

- (i) Government Primary School, Atu Street, Calabar
- (ii) Duke Town Primary School, Calabar (CSM)
- (iii) Methodist Primary School, Ikpe Annang
- (iv) Sacred Heart Primary School, Nto Eton (RCM)
- (v) Methodist Primary School, Eyo Bassey
- (vi) Government Primary School, Iquita
- (vii) St. Paul's RCM School, Uyo Oron
- (viii) Presbyterian Church of Nigeria School, Creek Town
- (ix) St. Peter's Catholic School, Urua Edet Obo

### B. Secondary:

- (i) Methodist Boys' High School, Oron
- (ii) Mary Hanney Girls' Secondary School, Oron (Methodist)
- (iii) St. Patrick's College, Ikot Ansa (RCM)
- (iv) Hope Waddell Training Institute, Calabar (CSM)
- (v) West African People's Institute, Calabar (Private)
- (vi) Government Secondary School, Creek Town

## 3. Rivers State

### A. Primary:

- (i) Banham Methodist School Port Harcourt
- (ii) Sacred Heart Primary School, Diobu (RCM)
- (iii) Umumasi Local Government School, Umumasi
- (iv) Elele Central School, Elele (CMS)
- (v) CMS Central School, Elelenwa
- (vi) RCM Primary School, Umukurushu

B. Secondary:

- (i) Government Comprehensive Secondary School, Port Harcourt
- (ii) Anglican Girls' Secondary School, Elelenwa
- (iii) St. Joseph's Secondary School, Umuaturu (RCM)
- (iv) Stella Marris College, Port Harcourt (RCM)

QUESTIONNAIRE TO HEADMASTERS OF PRIMARY SCHOOLS

1. Headmaster's Length of Teaching Experience . . . . . years

2. Conditions of Service for Teachers

(i) How would you compare teachers' conditions of service now with those of their counterparts in Government Service and other employments? (Please tick one of the answers below:)

(a) Similar in all respects . . . . .

(b) Compare very favourably but not quite the same

(c) Still some major discrepancies (please specify)

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

3. Payment of Teachers' Monthly Salaries

Kindly supply the dates on which teachers in your School were paid their monthly salaries for the past twelve months as shown below:

|         | Month     | Date of payment |
|---------|-----------|-----------------|
| 1974: i | October   |                 |
| ii      | November  |                 |
| iii     | December  |                 |
| 1975 iv | January   |                 |
| v       | February  |                 |
| vi      | March     |                 |
| vii     | April     |                 |
| viii    | May       |                 |
| ix      | June      |                 |
| x       | July      |                 |
| xi      | August    |                 |
| xii     | September |                 |

4. The State School System of Management and Control

(i) What would you consider to be the main strengths of the present system of management and control of education, particularly as it affects your school?

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

- (ii) On the same lines as (i) above, what do you consider to be its major weaknesses?

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

### 5. Denominational Distribution of Pupils Enrolled in the School

- (i) How many Pupils have you on roll at present in the school? . . . . .
- (ii) Kindly supply their denominational distribution as shown below:

| Catholics | Protestants | Total |
|-----------|-------------|-------|
|           |             |       |

- (iii) Is there any difference between the present denominational distribution of the pupils as compared with the period before the State take-over of Schools?

(a) Yes ... .. ☐

(b) No ... .. ☐

(Please tick one)

- (iv) Whichever of the two answers in (iii) above is applicable, please explain which group were more or less before and after the take-over or whether they were or are equal:

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## 6. Local Community Participation in School Management

(i) Compared with the period before the State take-over of the schools, how would you rate the present level of local community participation in the management of the schools in their midst?

- |                               |     |     |                          |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|--------------------------|
| (a) More actively involved    | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Less involved than before | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Not involved at all       | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) As involved now as before | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(Please tick whichever is applicable)

(ii) If more actively involved, what roles do they perform now which they did not before the take-over?

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(iii) Which of the bodies listed below have existed in the school before and after the State take-over?

| Body                         | Before the take-over | After the take-over |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| School Committee             |                      |                     |
| Parents/Teachers Association |                      |                     |

(please tick as applicable)

## 7. Other General Problems of the School Under the State System

Kindly comment freely on what you consider to be the main other problems of the school under the state system, particularly since you have been its head:

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Thanks for your co-operation, S. Okoronkwo Igwe  
(University of London, Institute of Education).



QUESTIONNAIRE TO PRINCIPALS OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS

1. Principal's Length of Teaching Experience . . . . . years.

2. Conditions of Service for Teachers:

(i) How would you compare teachers' conditions of service now with those of their counterparts in Government service and other employment?

(Please tick one of the answers below)

(a) Similar in all respects . . . . .

(b) Compare very favourably but not quite the same

(c) Still some major discrepancies (please specify)

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

3. Payment of teachers' monthly salaries:

Kindly supply the dates on which teachers in your school were paid their monthly salaries for the past twelve months as shown below:

| Month of the Year |      | Date of payment |
|-------------------|------|-----------------|
| 1974              | i    | October         |
|                   | ii   | November        |
|                   | iii  | December        |
| 1975              | iv   | January         |
|                   | v    | February        |
|                   | vi   | March           |
|                   | vii  | April           |
|                   | viii | May             |
|                   | ix   | June            |
|                   | x    | July            |
|                   | xi   | August          |
|                   | xii  | September       |

4. The State School System of Management and Control:

(i) What do you consider to be the main strengths of the present system of management and control of education, particularly as it affects your school?

. . . . .

. . . . .

. . . . .

. . . . .

(use additional sheet if necessary)

(ii) On the same line as (i) above, what do you consider to be its major weaknesses?

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

5. Denominational Distribution of Students Enrolled in the School:

(i) How many students have you on roll at present in the school? .....

(ii) Kindly supply their denominational distribution as shown below:

| Catholics | Protestants | Total |
|-----------|-------------|-------|
|           |             |       |

(iii) Is there any difference between the present denominational distribution of the students as compared with the period before the state take-over of schools?

(a) Yes     ...     ...     ...     ☐  
 (b) No     ...     ...     ...     ☐  
 (please tick one)

(iv) Whichever of the two answers in (iii) above is applicable, please explain which group were more or less before and after the take-over or whether they were or are equal:

.....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....

## 6. Local Community Participation in School Management:

(i) Compared with the period before the state take-over of the schools, how would you rate the present level of local community participation in the management of the schools in their midst?

|                               |     |     |     |                          |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|-----|--------------------------|
| (a) More actively involved    | ... | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Less involved than before | ... | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Not involved at all       | ... | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (d) As involved now as before | ... | ... | ... | <input type="checkbox"/> |

(Please tick whichever is applicable)

(ii) If more actively involved, what roles do they perform now which they did not before the take over?

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(iii) Which of the bodies listed below have existed in the school before and after the state take-over?

| Body                         | Before the take-over | Since the take-over |
|------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| Board of Governors           |                      |                     |
| Parents/Teachers Association |                      |                     |
| Old Students Association     |                      |                     |

(please tick as applicable)

## 7. Other General Problems of the School Under the State System

Kindly comment freely on what you consider to be the main other problems of the school under the state system, particularly since you have been its head

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(use additional sheet if necessary)

Thanks for your co-operation

S. Okoronkwo Igwe  
(University of London Institute of Education)

QUESTIONNAIRE TO SECRETARIES, DIVISIONAL SCHOOL MANAGEMENT BOARDS

1. Kindly supply the statistics on the following aspects of the primary schools in your Division as of June or October, 1975. Please specify which of the two months your figures are for by underlining one of the months in brackets:

- (i) Number of primary schools . . . . . (June or October)
- (ii) Total enrolment in all the schools . . . . . (June or October)
- (iii) Total number of teachers in all the schools . . . .  
(June or October)
- (iv) Number of Divisional School Management Board Members  
. . . . . (June or October)
- (v) Number of senior administrative staff in the Divisional  
School Management Board (June or October)  
. . . . .

2. Kindly supply the dates on which teachers in the Division were paid their monthly salaries for the twelve months as shown below:

| Month of the Year     | Date on which monthly salary<br>was paid |
|-----------------------|--|
| (i) October 1974      |  |
| (ii) November, 1974   |  |
| (iii) December, 1974  |  |
| (iv) January, 1975    |  |
| (v) February, 1975    |  |
| (vi) March, 1975      |  |
| (vii) April, 1975     |  |
| (viii) May, 1975      |  |
| (ix) June, 1975       |  |
| (x) July, 1975        |  |
| (xi) August, 1975     |  |
| (xii) September, 1975 |  |

3. Number of primary schools in the Division that have 'School Committee' . . . . .
4. Number of primary schools in the Division that have 'Parents/Teachers Association' . . . . .

Thanks a lot for your anticipated co-operation.

(S. Okoronkwo Igwe)  
University of London Institute of Education

Appendix 7: Selected List of Questions Asked at the Interviews with Church Leaders and Former Voluntary Agency School Managers and Supervisors, etc.

1. From the point of view of your Mission, what are principal reasons for the Government take-over of schools in the three Eastern States?
2. At present, what is the stand of your Mission on the take-over, i.e. what role would the Voluntary Agencies want to be assigned to them under the present system of management and control.
3. Has the State take-over of schools had any significant impact on the membership of the Church and its influence on the local people?
4. Would you kindly comment on the policy of, and the practice in your Mission on pupil admission into schools and the employment of teachers under the partnership system of management and control?
5. What do you think of the statement recently credited to one of the prominent Church leaders that the State take-over of schools has been "a tragedy for us", and if you agree with the statement, in what way has it been a tragedy?
6. Under the partnership arrangement, what role did your Mission assign to local communities in the establishment and management of schools in their midst?
7. Kindly comment on the often made allegation that under the partnership arrangement, teachers' salaries were often delayed and unauthorized levies imposed on both teachers and students.

8. Would you kindly comment on the school management set-up in your Mission under the partnership arrangement, and the sources of financing the schools?

9. In your view, what are the main weaknesses of the present system of educational management and control?

Some of the Questions to Mr. R.I. Uzoma, as a former Minister of Education in Eastern Nigeria and at present, a Member of the Teachers' Service Commission

10. As a former Minister of Education, what were the underlying considerations of the Nationalist Government policy for education?

11. In view of the limited financial resources of Eastern Nigeria in the 1950's, why did the NCNC Government of the Region embark on the UPE scheme of 1957 in a form obviously far beyond its financial resources?

12. In your present position as a member of the Teachers' Service Commission, East Central State, would you kindly comment on how the conditions of service for teachers now compare with those of their counterparts in the civil service?

## Appendix 8: The Missionary System of School Administration, 1965

The principal Missionary Societies had an elaborate hierarchy of officials for the management and control of their schools. All the same, as of 1965, there were significant differences in the system of administration between the RCM on one hand and the other three Protestant Denominations on the other. This was mainly revealed by the interviews with their former Education Secretaries and Supervisors. The set-up as it applied to each of the groups in 1965 was as outlined below:

### A. The Roman Catholic Mission

At the Regional level, the Catholic Mission had a General Education Secretary based at Enugu. His main function was to act as a liaison between the Regional Government and the Catholic Bishops who were the nominal proprietors of all Catholic schools in their different Dioceses. At this level too, there was the Catholic Education Committee with the General Education Secretary as its executive head. Its membership was made up of one Priest and one layman from each of the Catholic Dioceses in the Region. As a rule, every such Priest must be one of the Supervisors of schools in his Diocese.

In the Catholic set-up, the key people were the General Education Secretary and the Supervisors of schools. They advised the Bishops on all educational matters and directed and supervised the Parish Managers of schools. In this capacity, they acted "as a two-way channel of communication." In addition to his role as the liaison between the Bishops and the Government, the General Education Secretary also dealt

directly with the Chief Inspector in the Ministry of Education on professional matters, and with the Region's Chief Accountant's Office on financial issues. From the side of the Government, all ministerial directives concerning all Catholic schools were transmitted to the Mission through its General Education Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

At the diocesan level, and as a matter of Government policy, every two hundred primary schools or part thereof were entitled to one Supervisor. In the case of the Catholic Diocese of Enugu which had 400 primary schools in 1965, it was entitled to two Supervisors, one of whom was the General Education Secretary. Government regulations recognised only the post of supervisors. For this reason, as far as the Government was concerned, all Voluntary Agency Managers, Education Secretaries and Supervisors were regarded and paid simply as Supervisors.<sup>2</sup>

Each Diocese was divided into a number of Parishes depending on its size. Each of the Parish Priests was also the Manager of all Catholic primary schools in his area of authority. Some of them had as many as 40 schools or more, or as few as 5 or less. One of the duties of the Parish Managers was to prepare and submit salary bills of all the teachers under their management to the Zonal Inspector of Education, who checked them and forwarded them to the Government Treasury for payment. The Parish Managers later collected the cash and paid the teachers through their headmasters. The organisational chart for the administration of the RCM schools in the Region was as shown in illustration A. below.

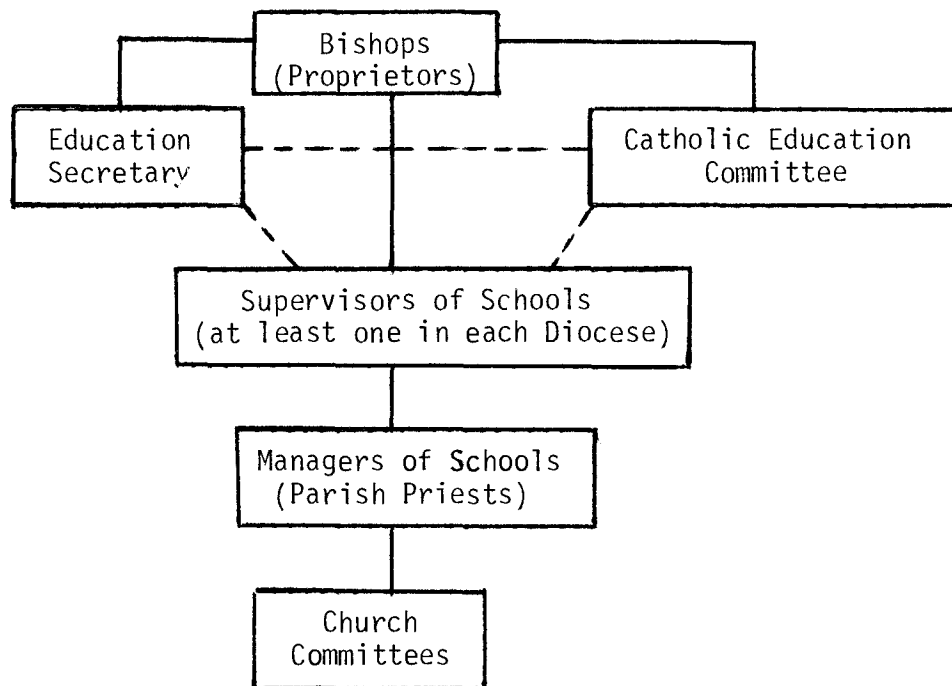
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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Wheeler, A.C.R., op. cit. pp. 48-9.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with His Lordship Dr. Francis Arinze Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, 6th December, 1975.



Fig. A. Eastern Nigeria: The Organisation of Catholic Educational Administration 1965<sup>3</sup>



Commenting on the system of administering Catholic primary schools, the present Catholic Archbishop of Onitsha, Dr. F.A. Arinze who was the General Education Secretary of the Mission at Enugu up to 1965, said at the interview with the author:

"We did not have formal management boards for primary schools.

It was generally the Parish Priests who were the managers of the primary schools. But they would discuss the matters of the schools with their Church Committees".

At the secondary level, the RCM had Boards of Governors for all its secondary schools according to the regulations laid down by the Government. There was no single body at any level responsible for secondary education in the Catholic set-up. Each Board of Governors functioned independent of any other body outside it in matters of administering the school under its control.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from Wheeler, A.C.R., op. cit., p. 49.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Archbishop Arinze, op. cit.

As was shown in Chapter Nine, at the outbreak of the national crisis in 1966, the Catholic Mission in the Region had a total of 8 Education Secretaries and an equal number of deputies, 48 Supervisors and 96 Parish Managers of schools. Of the 48 Supervisors, 40 were expatriates, and of the 96 Parish Managers, 80 were non-Nigerians too.<sup>5</sup> Thus, of its 160 senior administrative personnel, 120 or 75 per cent were expatriates. This number did not include many others who were attached to the Mission secondary schools as Principals or teachers and others who worked in Hospitals and other establishments run by the Church. From these figures the RCM alone had at least 152 different administrative officers for its 2,380 or 40 per cent of the primary schools in the Region in 1965.

#### B. The Protestant Missions

The pattern of educational administration as it applied to the RCM was in many respects, similar to that of the Protestant Missions in general. One significant difference was that the individual Protestant Denominations had no General Education Secretary like the Catholics. Instead, there was the Eastern Education Advisory Committee of the Christian Council of Nigeria. This was the highest educational organ of the Protestant Missions in the Region. The duties of its Secretary were among others: co-ordinating the work of the Education Secretaries of all the other denominations; and representing them at the Regional Board of Education. The EEAC met twice a year to discuss and agree on

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<sup>5</sup> Interview with His Lordship, Dr. Mark Unegbu, Catholic Bishop of Owerri, 25th November, 1975.

a common line of action by all its member-Missions. Until the outbreak of the national crisis of 1966, Mr. R.I. Uzoma was its Secretary.<sup>6</sup>

Every member-Mission of the EEAC had its own separate set-up for the administration of its own schools. In the case of the CMS, the largest agency in the group, every Diocese was autonomous in educational matters. The highest authority at this level was the Diocesan Education Board. Its nominal head was the Bishop, and its executive head was the Diocesan Education Secretary or General Manager as he was sometimes called. Below the Board was the Archdeaconry Education Committee and next down the line of authority was the District or Parish School Committee. In addition, and unlike the RCM, the CMS had a Local School Committee to look after the affairs of every one of its primary schools.

The Local School Committees drew their members from among the influential people in the community served by the school. Its headmaster usually served as the Secretary of his School Committee. The members of the District or Parish School Committees were drawn from among those of the associating Local School Committees. In return, the District or Parish Committees sent representatives to the Archdeaconry Education Committee from which the Diocesan Education Board in turn draw its membership.

For purposes of educational administration, the CMS had three autonomous Dioceses in the Region. They were: the Diocese of Owerri, Headquarters, Owerri; the Diocese on the Niger, Headquarters, Onitsha; and the Niger Delta Diocese, Educational Headquarters, Umuahia and Ecclesiastical Headquarters, Aba. The Bishop lived at Aba and the

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<sup>6</sup>The Interview with Mr. R.I. Uzoma, op. cit.

Education Secretary at Umuahia.

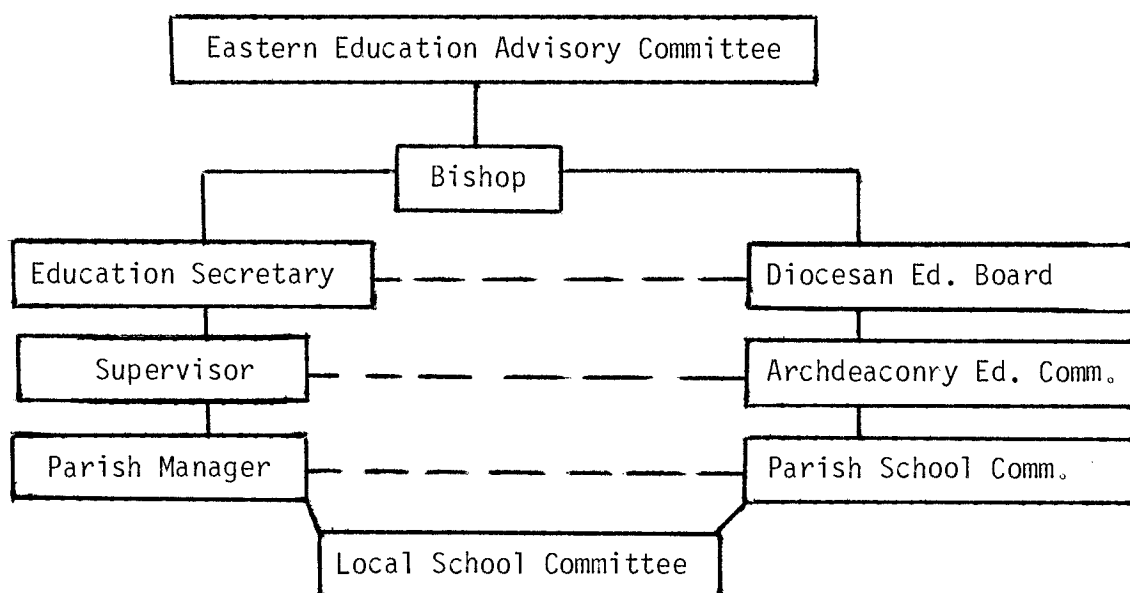
In all, the Mission had three Education Secretaries. As of 1965, Owerri Diocese had 29 Senior Administrative personnel made up of one Education Secretary, two Supervisors, thirteen Archdeaconry Managers and thirteen District or Parish Managers. It is to be noted that all the 29 Senior Education Administrators were Nigerians. Of its three Bishops at the time, only one was an expatriate. The other two were Nigerians.<sup>7</sup>

The importance of the composition of the nationalities of the top personnel in the administrative set-up of the CMS is to be related to the point made in the thesis concerning the relationship between the pioneer Nigerian Nationalists and the Expatriate Missionaries in general. The fact that the key positions in the Anglican Mission were occupied by Nigerians is a part of the explanation of the comparatively better relations between the CMS and the Government. This was unlike the RCM whose similar positions were occupied largely by Irish Priests. A diagrammatic representation of the set-up in the CMS was as shown by the illustration below.

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<sup>7</sup> Interview with Mr. J.U. Ekeocha, former CMS Education Secretary for Owerri Diocese and currently Chairman, Divisional School Management Board, Mbaitolu/Ideduru, Owerri, 1st December, 1975.

Fig. B. Eastern Nigeria: The Organisation of CMS Educational Administration 1965.



The above administrative set-up, minus the Bishops, applied also to the Methodist and the Church of Scotland Missions. In the case of the former, it had a total of 14 senior administrative personnel looking after its schools in its two Districts (Dioceses) in the Region. They were made up of 4 Managers, 2 Education Secretaries, and 8 Supervisors. All the fourteen key positions were held by Nigerians.<sup>8</sup> As for the CSM, it had a total of seven Supervisors and one General Manager who was the only expatriate among them.<sup>9</sup>

One significant difference between the Methodists and the Presbyterians on one hand, and the Anglicans on the other, was the fact that in the case of the latter, all their Supervisors and Parish or District Managers were members of their clergy. But with the other two denominations, they were drawn from among the most experienced Headmasters of their primary schools.

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Rev. S.K. Okpo, former Methodist Mission General Manager of Schools, Oron, 26th September, 1975.

<sup>9</sup> Interview with Rev. N. Eme, CSM Synod Cler., Igbere, 4th December, 1975.

In all the Missionary Societies, Catholic and Protestant, the Headmasters of their primary schools had little or no other responsibility except to see to it that teaching was carried on regularly. Their attitudes varied from place to place depending on circumstances. Some of them insisted on their teachers reporting for duty punctually, were neat and tidy, did not teach sitting down, marked pupils' written work conscientiously and kept all the records up-to-date, the attendance registers, diaries, schemes of work and notes of lessons.

Other Headmasters particularly, in the comparatively poorer and remote villages, where the payment of teachers' salaries was irregular, exercised only nominal supervision, and rarely concerned themselves with the day to day performances of their teachers. In the case of the Protestant Missions, the Headmasters also acted as the Secretaries to the Local School Committees. In all the Missions, they also collected school fees and paid over to the Parish Managers from whom they collected their teachers' monthly salaries.

As the secondary school level, the administrative set-up was the same in 1965 as it was during the Colonial Period discussed earlier (see Chapter 4.2.2) and also as briefly mentioned above in the case of the RCM. In all cases, the Principals acted as the Secretaries of their Schools' Boards of Governors, employed and dismissed the teachers, and looked after the day to day running of the schools in consultation with the Diocesan Education Secretary or the Proprietor as the case might be.

Appendix 9: The Common Religious Knowledge Syllabus for East Central State Primary Schools, July, 1975.

Primary I:

1. Natural Trust in God Our Heavenly Father.
2. Stories of Jesus Christ: Showing God's Care and Concern for Man - His Children e.g.
  - (a) Lost Sheep,
  - (b) Lost Coin,
  - (c) Lost Son (Prodigal Son),
  - (d) Good Shepherd,
  - (e) Good Samaritan, and about people whom Jesus met.

Primary II:

1. The Boyhood of Jesus Christ
2. The Early Life of Jesus Christ
3. The Religious Life of Jesus Christ

Primary III:

1. Jesus and His Relations with People
2. Jesus as a Teacher
3. Stories from the Old Testament e.g.
  - (a) Creation of the World - Beginning
  - (b) The Fall of Man

Primary IV:

1. Some of the Parables of Jesus Christ
2. Early Followers of Jesus Christ
3. The Old Testament Heroes: Moses, Joshua, Judges, etc.

Primary V:

1. St. John the Baptist: Birth, Life and Work.
2. Jesus: His Baptism and Temptation
3. Jesus Christ and His Disciples
4. Jesus Christ: His Arrest, Trial, Crucifixion and Resurrection. "I am with You Always".
5. Jesus at Prayers.
6. Early Kings of the Old Testament: Samuel, Saul, David, Solomon, etc.

Primary VI:

1. St. Paul the Missionary:
  - (a) Paul's Early Life
  - (b) His Studies
  - (c) His Conversion
  - (d) His Missionary Work
2. The Apostles Creed
3. Holy Trinity
4. Nicene Creed
5. The Four Last Things
6. The Christian Way of Life, etc.



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